

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
JOHN POMFRET.
WITH
THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

Cooke's Edition.

If heaven the grateful liberty would give,
That I might chuse my method how to live---
Near some fair town I'd have a private seat,
Built uniform; not little, nor too great---
I'd have a clear and competent estate,
That I might live genteelly, but not great---
I'd have a little vault, but always stor'd
With the best wines each vintage could afford---
I'd chuse two friends, whose company would be
A great advance to my felicity---
Would bounteous heaven once more indulge, I'd chuse
(For who would so much satisfaction lose
As witty nymphs in conversation give?)
Near some obliging modest fair to live.

The Choice.

EMBELLISHED WITH SUPERB ENGRAVINGS.

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Ireland.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
JOHN POMFRET.

CONTAINING HIS

CHOICE,	LAST EPIPHANY,
PROSPECT OF DEATH,	DIVINE ATTRIBUTES,
REASON,	ELEAZAR'S LAMENTATION,
&c. &c. &c.	

I'd be concern'd in no litigious jar;
Belov'd by all, not vainly popular.
Whate'er assistance I had pow'r to bring,
T'oblige my country, or to serve my king,
Whene'er they call'd, I'd readily afford
My tongue, my pen, my counsel, or my sword--
If heaven a date of many years would give,
Thus I'd in pleasure, ease, and plenty, live---
And, when committed to the dust, I'd have
Few tears, but friendly, dropp'd into my grave;
Then would my exit so propitious be,
All men would wish to live and die like me.

The Choice.

London:
PRINTED AND EMBELLISHED
Under the Direction of
G. COOKE.

LIFE OF POMFRET.

AS very few anecdotes concerning the Life of Mr. John Pomfret have been transmitted to posterity, we are precluded from the means of giving a circumstantial detail of incidents, or an elaborate discussion of the merits of his writings.

From a short account prefixed to his poems, by an anonymous friend, it appears that he was the son of the Reverend Mr. Pomfret, Rector of Luton, in Bedfordshire, where he was born in the year 1677.

He received a liberal education at an eminent grammar school, in the country, from whence he was sent to Queen's College, Cambridge, where, according to the University Register, he was admitted to his Bachelor's degree in 1684, and to his Master's degree in 1698.

Soon after his leaving College, he entered into orders, and was presented to the living of Malden, in Bedfordshire; but when he applied to the Bishop of London for institution and induction, he was retarded for some time by a disgust the Prelate had taken at the following lines in his Poem entitled *The Choice*.

“ And as I near approach'd the verge of life,
“ Some kind relation (for I'd have no wife)
“ Should take upon him all my wordly care,
“ Whilst I did for a better state prepare.”

It was inferred, from the words in the parenthesis, that the author considered happiness more likely to be found in the company of a mistress than a wife; but they certainly could imply nothing more than his preference of a single to a married life. But this reproach was easily obliterated, for Pomfret, like most other men who plan schemes of life, had departed from his purpose, and was then married; yet the malicious design of his enemies had a very fatal consequence, for the delay occasioned by the obstruction he met with, constrained his attendance in London, where he caught the small pox, and died in 1703, in the thirty-sixth year of his age.

Pomfret was a man not destitute either of erudition or genius, who seems to have spent his life in innocence, ease, and tranquillity. By some he was supposed to have been tinctured with fanaticism; but this imputation was cast on him by there having been one of his surname, a dissenting teacher, who published some rhymes, equally repugnant to the rules of poetry and common sense.

The first edition of Pomfret's poems was published in 1699, to which he prefixed a very modest and sensible preface. His

Reason, a satire, and *Dies Novissima*, a *Pindaric Ode*, were inserted in the edition of 1724, the first from a copy printed in 1700, and the other from a manuscript in the possession of a friend.

The poem entitled *Reason*, was written at a time when disputes on doctrinal points of religion were carried on with such intemperate zeal by the clergy, that king William was obliged to interpose his royal authority, prohibiting them from publishing their opinions on those subjects. It is a severe, though just satire, upon the antagonists engaged in those disputes, and tends to enforce the very laudable principles of moderation and candour, from arguments founded upon human fallibility, and, as such, claims a title to general approbation.

Our author has been disingenuously treated with respect to his poetical compositions, in a book entitled *Poems by the Earl of Roscommon and Mr. Duke*, in the preface to which the publisher has inserted the following paragraph. “In this collection,” says he, “of my Lord Roscommon’s poems, care has been taken to insert all that I could possibly procure that are truly genuine, there having been several things published under his name which were written by others, the authors of which I could set down if it were material.” Now this editor would have been more just, both to the public and to the memory of Lord Roscommon, if he had told us what productions had been under his Lordship’s name by others, than by concealing the authors of such gross impositions; instead of which, he has attributed “the Prospect of Death” to the Earl of Roscommon, which was written by Mr. Pomfret, many years after his Lordship’s decease.

Dr. Johnson sums up the poetical merit of Pomfret in the following concise and liberal manner.

“He has been always the favourite of that class of readers, who, without vanity or criticism, seek only their own amusement.

“His *Choice* exhibits a system of Life adapted to common notions, and equal to common expectations; such a state as affords plenty and tranquillity, without exclusion of intellectual pleasures. Perhaps no composition in our language has been oftener perused than Pomfret’s *Choice*.

“In his other *Poems* there is an easy volubility:—the pleasure of smooth metre is afforded to the ear, and the mind is not oppressed with pondrous or entangled with intricate sentiment. He pleases many, and he who pleases many must have some species of merit.”

THE PREFACE.

IT will be to little purpose, the author presumes, to offer any reasons why the following poems appear in public, for it is ten to one whether he gives the true, and if he does, it is much greater odds whether the gentle reader is so courteous as to believe him. He could tell the world, according to the laudable custom of prefaces, that it was thro' the irresistible importunity of friends, or some other excuse of ancient renown, that he ventured them to the press; but he thought it much better to leave every man to guess for himself, and then he would be sure to satisfy himself; for, let what will be pretended, people are grown so very apt to fancy they are always in the right, that unless it hit their humour, it is immediately condemned for a sham and hypocrisy.—In short, that which wants an excuse for being in print, ought not to have been printed at all: but whether the ensuing poems deserve to stand in that class the world must have leave to determine. What faults the true judgment of the gentleman may find out, it is to be hoped his candour and good humour will easily pardon; but those which the peevishness and ill-nature of the critic may discover, must expect to be unmercifully used; though, methinks, it is a very preposterous pleasure to scratch other persons till the blood comes, and then laugh at and ridicule them.

Some persons, perhaps, may wonder how things of this nature dare come into the world without the protection of some great name, as they call it, and a fulsome epistle dedicatory to his Grace, or Right Honourable: for if a poem struts out under my Lord's patronage, the author imagines it is no less than *scandalum magnatum* to dislike it, especially if he thinks fit to tell the world that this same Lord is a person of wonderful wit and understanding, a notable judge of poetry, and a very considerable poet himself. But if a poem have no intrinsic excellencies and real beauties, the greatest name in the world will never induce a man of sense to approve it; and if it has them, Tom Piper's is as good as my Lord Duke's: the only difference is, Tom claps half an ounce of snuff into the poet's hand, and his Grace twenty guineas: for, indeed, there lies the strength of a great name, and the greatest protection an author can receive from it.

To please every one would be a new thing, and to write so as to please nobody would be as new; for even Quarles and Wytters have their admirers. The author is not so fond of fame to desire it from the injudicious many, nor of so mortified a temper not to wish it from the discerning few. It is not the multitude of applauses, but the good sense of the applauders, which establishes a valuable reputation; and if a Rymer or a Congreve say it is well, he will not be at all solicitous how great the majority may be to the contrary.

London, Anno 1699.

MISCELLANIES.

THE CHOICE.

IF Heaven the grateful liberty would give,
That I might chuse my method how to live,
And all those hours propitious Fate should lend
In blisful ease and satisfaction spend :

Near some fair town I'd have a private seat, 5
Built uniform ; not little, nor too great ;
Better if on a rising ground it stood,
On this side fields ; on that a neighb'ring wood :
It should within no other things contain
But what are useful, necessary, plain : 10
Methinks 'tis nauseous, and I'd ne'er endure
The needless pomp of gaudy furniture.

A little garden, grateful to the eye,
And a cool rivulet run murm'ring by,
On whose delicious banks a stately row 15
Of shady limes or sycamores should grow ;
At th' end of which a silent study plac'd,
Should be with all the noblest authors grac'd.
Horace and Virgil, in whose mighty lines
Immortal wit and solid learning shines ; 20
Sharp Juvenal, and am'rous Ovid too,
Who all the turns of love's soft passion knew ;
He that with judgment reads his charming lines,
In which strong art with stronger nature joins,
Must grant his fancy does the best excel, 25
His thoughts so tender, and express'd so well ;
With all those Moderns, men of steady sense,
Esteem'd for learning and for eloquence.

In some of these, as Fancy should advise,
I'd always take my morning exercise ; 30
For sure no minutes bring us more content
Than those in pleasing useful studies spent.

I'd have a clear and competent estate,
That I might live genteelly, but not great ;
As much as I could moderately spend ; 35
A little more, sometimes t'oblige a friend:

Nor should the sons of Poverty repine
 Too much at Fortune, they should taste of mine ;
 And all that objects of true pity were
 Should be reliev'd with what my wants could spare : 40
 For that our Maker has too largely giv'n
 Should be return'd in gratitude to Heaven.

A frugal plenty should my table spread,
 With healthy, not luxurious, dishes fed ;
 Enough to satisfy, and something more, 45
 To feed the stranger and the neighb'ring poor.
 Strong meat indulges vice, and pamp'ring food
 Creates diseases, and inflames the blood :
 But what's sufficient to make nature strong,
 And the bright lamp of life continue long, 50
 I'd freely take ; and, as I did possess,
 The bounteous Author of my plenty bless.

I'd have a little vault, but always stor'd
 With the best wines each vintage could afford.
 Wine whets the wit, improves its native force, 55
 And gives a pleasant flavour to discourse :
 By making all out spirits debonaire,
 Throws off the lees, the sediment of care :
 But as the greatest blessing Heaven lends
 May be debauch'd, and serve ignoble ends, 60
 So, but too oft, the grape's refreshing juice
 Does many mischievous effects produce.
 My house should no such rude disorders know,
 As from high drinking consequently flow,
 Nor would I use what was so kindly giv'n 65
 To the dishonour of indulgent Heaven.

If any neighbour came he should be free,
 Us'd with respect, and not uneasy be
 In my retreat, or to himself or me.
 What freedom, prudence, and right reason, give 70
 All men may, with impunity receive ;
 But the least swerving from their rule's too much ;
 For what's forbidden us 'tis death to touch.

That life may be more comfortable yet,
 And all my joys refin'd, sincere, and great, 75

I'd chuse two friends, whose company would be
 A great advance to my felicity ;
 Well born, of humours suited to my own,
 Discreet, and men as well as books have known ;
 Brave, gen'rous, witty, and exactly free 80
 From loose behaviour or formality ;
 Airy and prudent ; merry, but not light ;
 Quick in discerning, and in judging right ;
 Secret they should be, faithful to their trust,
 In reas'ning cool, strong, temperate, and just ; 85
 Obliging, open, without huffing brave ;
 Brisk in gay talking, and in sober grave ;
 Close in dispute, but not tenacious ; try'd
 By solid reason, and let that decide ;
 Not prone to lust, revenge, or envious hate, 90
 Nor busy meddlers with intrigues of state ;
 Strangers to slander, and sworn foes to spite ;
 Not quarrellsome, but stout enough to fight ;
 Loyal and pious, friends to Cæsar ; true,
 As dying martyrs, to their Maker too : 95
 In their society I could not miss
 A permanent, sincere, substantial, bliss.

Would bounteous Heav'n once more indulge, I'd
 (For who would so much satisfaction lose [choose
 As witty nymphs in conversation give ?) 100
 Near some obliging modest fair to live ;
 For there's that sweetness in a female mind,
 Which in a man's we cannot hope to find ;
 That by a secret but a pow'rful art,
 Winds up the spring of life, and does impart 105
 Fresh vital heat to the transported heart.

I'd have her reason all her passions sway ;
 Easy in company, in private gay ;
 Coy to a fop, to the deserving free :
 Still constant to herself, and just to me : 110
 A soul she should have for great actions fit,
 Prudence and wisdom to direct her wit ;
 Courage to look bold Danger in the face ;
 No fear, but only to be proud or base ;

Quick to advise, by an emergence prest,
 To give good counsel, or to take the best :
 I'd have th' expression of her thoughts be such,
 She might not seem reserv'd, nor talk too much ;
 That shews a want of judgment and of sense ;
 More than enough is but impertinence :
 Her conduct regular, her mirth refin'd,
 Civil to strangers, to her neighbours kind ;
 Averse to vanity, revenge, and pride,
 In all the methods of deceit untry'd ;
 So faithful to her friend, and good to all,
 No censure might upon her actions fall :
 Then would e'en Envy be compell'd to say—
 She goes the least of woman-kind astray.

115

120

125

To this fair creature I'd sometimes retire,
 Her conversation would new joys inspire,
 Give life an edge so keen, no surly care
 Would venture to assault my soul, or dare
 Near my retreat, to hide one secret snare.
 But so divine, so noble, a repast
 I'd seldom, and with moderation taste ;
 For highest cordials all their virtue lose
 By a too frequent and too bold a use ;
 And what would cheer the spirits in distress,
 Ruins our health when taken to excess.

130

135

I'd be concern'd in no litigious jar ;
 Belov'd by all, not vainly popular.
 Whate'er assistance I had pow'r to bring,
 T'oblige my country, or to serve my king,
 Whene'er they call'd I'd readily afford
 My tongue, my pen, my counsel, or my sword.
 Law-suits I'd shun with as much studious care
 As I would dens where hungry lions are,
 And rather put up injuries than be
 A plague to him who'd be a plague to me.
 I value quiet at a price too great
 To give for my revenge so dear a rate ;
 For what do we by all our bustle gain
 But counterfeit delight for real pain ;

140

145

150

If Heaven a date of many years would give,
 Thus I'd in pleasure, ease, and plenty live ;
 And as I near approach'd the verge of life,
 Some kind relation (for I'd have no wife)
 Should take upon him all my worldly care,
 Whilst I did for a better state prepare :
 Then I'd not be with any trouble vex'd,
 Nor have the ev'ning of my days perplex'd,
 But, by a silent and a peaceful death,
 Without a sigh resign my aged breath :
 And when committed to the dust, I'd have
 Few tears, but friendly, dropp'd into my grave :
 Then would my exit so propitious be,
 All men would wish to live and die like me.

155

160

167

LOVE TRIUMPHANT OVER REASON.

A VISION.

THOU' gloomy thoughts disturb'd my anxious breast
 All the long night, and drove away my rest,
 Just as the dawning day began to rise
 A grateful slumber clos'd my waking eyes ;
 But active fancy to strange regions flew,
 And brought surprising objects to my view.
 Methought I walk'd in a delightful grove,
 The soft retreat of gods, when gods make love ;
 Each beauteous object my charm'd soul amaz'd,
 And I on each with equal wonder gaz'd,
 Nor knew which most delighted ; all was fine,
 The noble product of some Pow'r divine :
 But as I travers'd the obliging shade,
 Which myrtle, jessamine, and roses, made,
 I saw a person whose celestial face
 At first declar'd her goddess of the place ;
 But I discover'd, when approaching near,
 An aspect full of beauty, but severe :
 Bold and majestic, ev'ry awful look
 Into my soul a secret horror struck :
 Advancing farther on she made a stand,
 And beckon'd me ; I kneeling, kiss'd her hand ;

5

10

15

20

- “ Then thus began—“ Bright Deity! (for so
 “ You are, no mortals such perfections know)
 “ I may intrude ; but how I was convey’d 25
 “ To this strange place, or by what pow’rful aid,
 “ I’m wholly ignorant ; nor know I more,
 “ Or where I am, or whom I do adore :
 “ Instruct me, then, that I no longer may
 “ In darkness serve the goddess I obey.” 30
 “ Youth !” she reply’d, “ this place belongs to one
 “ By whom you’ll be, and thousands are undone.
 “ These pleasant walks, and all these shady bow’rs,
 “ Are in the government of dang’rous pow’rs.
 “ Love’s the capricious master of this coast, 35
 “ This fatal labyrinth, where fools are lost.
 “ I dwell not here amidst these gaudy things,
 “ Whose short enjoyment no true pleasure brings,
 “ But have an empire of a nobler kind ;
 “ My regal seat’s in the celestial mind, 40
 “ Where, with a godlike and a peaceful hand,
 “ I rule, and make those happy I command ;
 “ For while I govern all within’s at rest ;
 “ No stormy passion revels in my breast :
 “ But when my pow’r is despicable grown, 45
 “ And rebel appetites usurp the throne,
 “ The soul no longer quiet thoughts enjoys,
 “ But all is tumult and eternal noise. [spis’d ;
 “ Know, Youth ! I’m Reason, which you’ve oft de-
 “ I am that Reason which you never priz’d ; 50
 “ And tho’ my argument successless prove,
 “ (For reason seems impertinence in love)
 “ Yet I’ll not see my charge (for all mankind
 “ Are to my guardianship by Heaven assign’d)
 “ Into the grasp of any ruin run 55
 “ That I can warn ’em of, and they may shun.
 “ Fly, youth ! these guilty shades ; retreat in time,
 “ Ere your mistake’s converted to a crime ;
 “ For ignorance no longer can atone
 “ When once the error and the fault is known. 60

" You thought, perhaps, as giddy youth inclines,
 " Imprudently, to value all that shines,
 " In these retirements freely to possess
 " True joy, and strong substantial happiness :
 " But here gay Folly keeps her court, and here, 65
 " In crowds, her tributary fops appear,
 " Who, blindly lavish of their golden days,
 " Consume them all in her fallacious ways.
 " Pert Love with her, by joint commission, rules
 " In this capacious realm of idle fools, 70
 " Who, by false arts and popular deceits,
 " The careless, fond, unthinking mortal cheats.
 " 'Tis easy to descend into the snare,
 " By the pernicious conduct of the fair ;
 " But safely to return from this abode 75
 " Requires the wit, the prudence, of a god ;
 " Tho' you, who have not tasted that delight,
 " Which only at a distance charms your sight,
 " May, with a little toil, retrieve your heart,
 " Which lost, is subject to eternal smart. 80
 " Bright Delia's beauty, I must needs confess,
 " Is truly great, nor would I make it less ;
 " That where to wrong her where she merits most ;
 " But dragons guard the fruit, and rocks the coast ;
 " And who would run, that's moderately wise, 85
 " A certain danger for a doubtful prize ?
 " If you miscarry, you are not lost so far,
 " (For there's no erring twice in love and war)
 " You'll ne'er recover, but must always wear
 " Those chains you'll find it difficult to bear. 90
 " Delia has charms, I own ; such charms would move
 " Old Age and frozen Impotence to love :
 " But do not venture where such danger lies ;
 " Avoid the sight of those victorious eyes,
 " Whose pois'nous rays do to the soul impart 95
 " Delicious ruin and a pleasing smart.
 " You draw, insensibly, destruction near,
 " And love the danger which you ought to fear.
 " If the light pains you labour under now
 " Destroy your ease, and make your spirits bow, 100

“ You’ll find ’em much more grievous to be borne,
 “ When heavier made by an imperious scorn ;
 “ Nor can you hope she will your passion hear
 “ With softer notions, or a kinder ear ;
 “ Than those of other swains, who always found 105
 “ She rather widen’d than clos’d up the wound.
 “ But grant she should indulge your flame, and give
 “ Whate’er you’d ask, nay, all you can receive :
 “ The short-liv’d pleasure would so quickly cloy,
 “ Bring such a weak and such a feeble joy, 110
 “ You’d have but small encouragement to boast
 “ The tinsel rapture worth the pains it cost.
 “ Consider, Strephon ! soberly of things,
 “ What strange inquietudes love always brings ;
 “ The foolish fears, vain hopes, and jealousies, 115
 “ Which still attend upon this fond disease ;
 “ How you must cringe and bow, submit and whine,
 “ Call ev’ry feature, ev’ry look, divine ;
 “ Commend each sentence with an humble smile ;
 “ Tho’ nonsense, swear it is a heav’nly style ; 120
 “ Servilely rail at all she disapproves,
 “ And as ignobly flatter all she loves ;
 “ Renounce your very sense, and silent sit
 “ While she puts off impertinence for wit : 124
 “ Like setting-dog, new whipp’d for springing game,
 “ You must be made, by due correction, tame.
 “ But if you can endure the nauseous rule
 “ Of women, do ; love on, and be a fool.
 “ You know the danger, your own methods use,
 “ The good or evil’s in your pow’r to choose : 130
 “ But who’d expect a short and dubious bliss
 “ On the declining of a precipice,
 “ Where, if he slips, not Fate itself can save
 “ The falling wretch from an untimely grave ?”
 “ Thou great Directress of our minds,” said I, 135
 “ We safely on your dictates may rely,
 “ And that which you have now so kindly prest]
 “ Is true, and, without contradiction, best ;
 “ But with a steady sentence to control
 “ The heat and vigour of a youthful soul, 140

" While gay temptations hover in our sight,
 " And daily bring new objects of delight,
 " Which on us with surprising beauty smile,
 " Is difficult, but is a noble toil.
 " The best may slip, and the most cautious fall ; 145
 " He's more than mortal that ne'er err'd at all :
 " And tho' fair Delia has my soul possess'd,
 " I'll chase her bright idea from my breast ;
 " At least I'll make one essay : if I fail,
 " And Delia's charms o'er Reason do prevail, 150
 " I may be, sure, from rigid censures free ;
 " Love was my foe, and Love's a deity."
 Then she rejoin'd ; " May you successful prove
 " In your attempt to curb imperious Love ;
 " Then will proud passion own her rightful lord ; 155
 " You to yourself, I to my throne, restor'd :
 " But to confirm your courage, and inspire
 " Your resolution with a bolder fire,
 " Follow me, Youth ! I'll shew you that shall move
 " Your soul to curse the tyranny of Love." 160
 Then she convey'd me to a dismal shade
 Which melancholy yew and cypress made,
 Where I beheld an antiquated pile
 Of rugged building in a narrow aisle ;
 The water round it gave a nauseous smell, 165
 Like vapours steaming from a sulph'rous cell ;
 The ruin'd wall, compos'd of stinking mud,
 O'ergrown with hemlock, on supporters stood,
 As did the roof, ungrateful to the view ;
 'Twas both an hospital and bedlam too : 170
 Before the ent'rance mould'ring bones were spread,
 Some skeletons entire, some lately dead ;
 A little rubbish loosely scatter'd o'er
 Their bodies uninterr'd, lay round the door :
 No fun'ral rites to any here were paid, 175
 But dead, like dogs, into the dust convey'd.
 From hence, by Reason's conduct I was brought,
 Thro' various turnings to a spacious vault,
 Where I beheld, and 'twas a mournful sight,
 Vast crowds of wretches all debarr'd from light, 180

But what a few dim lamps, expiring, had,
Which made the prospect more amazing sad ;
Some wept, some rav'd, some musically mad ;
Some swearing loud, and others laughing ; some
Were always talking, others always dumb :

185

Here one, a dagger in his breast, expires,
And quenches with his blood his am'rous fires :
There hangs a second ; and, not far remov'd,
A third lies poison'd, who false Celia lov'd.

All sorts of madness, ev'ry kind of death,
By which unhappy mortals lose their breath,
Were here expos'd before my wond'ring eyes,
The sad effects of female treacheries.

190

Others I saw, who were not quite bereft
Of sense, tho' very small remains were left,
Cursing the fatal folly of their youth,
For trusting to perjurious woman's truth.

195

These on the left—upon the right a view
Of equal horror, equal mis'ry, too ;
Amazing, all employ'd my troubled thought,
And with new wonder new aversion brought.

200

There I beheld a wretched num'rous throng
Of pale, lean mortals : some lay stretch'd along
On beds of straw, disconsolate and poor ;

Others extended naked on the floor :

205

Exil'd from human pity here they lie,

And know no end of mis'ry till they die :

But death, which comes in gay and prosp'rous days,
Too soon in time of misery delays.

These dreadful spectacles had so much pow'r,

210

I vow'd, and solemnly, to love no more ?

For sure that flame is kindled from below

Which breeds such sad variety of woe.

Then we descending, by some few degrees,
From this stupendous scene of miseries,

215

Bold Reason brought me to another cave,

Dark as the inmost chambers of the grave ;

“ Here, Youth,” she cry'd, “ in the acutest pain

“ Those villains lie who have their fathers slain,

219

" Stabb'd their own brothers, nay, their friends, to
 " Ambitious, proud, revengeful, mistresses, [please
 " Who, after all their services, preferr'd
 " Some rugged fellow of the brawny herd
 " Before those wretches, who despairing, dwell
 " In agonies no human tongue can tell.

225

" Darkneſs prevents the too amazing ſight,
 " And you may bleſs the happy want of light."

But my tormented ears were fill'd with ſighs,
 Expiring groans, and lamentable cries,

So very ſad, I could endure no more ;

230

Methought I felt the miſeries they bore.

Then to my guide, ſaid I, " For pity, now
 " Conduct me back ; here I confirm my vow,

" Which if I dare infringe, be this my fate,
 " To die thus wretched, and repent too late.

235

" The charms of beauty I'll no more purſue ;

" Delia ! farewel, farewel for ever too."

Then we return'd to the delightful grove,
 Where Reaſon ſtill diſſuaded me from love.

" You ſee," ſhe cry'd, " what miſery attends

240

" On love, and where too frequently it ends ;

" And let not that unwieldy paſſion ſway

" Your ſoul, which none but whining fools obey.

" The maſculine brave ſpirit ſcorns to own

" The proud uſurper of my ſacred throne,

245

" Nor with idolatrous devotion pays

" To the falſe god or ſacrifice or praiſe.

" The ſyren's muſic charms the ſailor's ear,

" But he is ruin'd if he ſtops to hear ;

" And if you liſten, Love's harmonious voice

250

" As much delight, as certainly deſtroys.

" Ambroſia mix'd with aconite may have

" A pleaſant taſte, but ſends you to the grave ;

" For tho' the latent poiſon may be ſtill

" A while, it very ſeldom fails to kill.

255

" But who'd partake the food of gods to die

" Within a day, or live in miſery ?

" Who'd eat with emperors, if o'er his head

" A poniard hung but by a ſingle thread ?*

* The feaſt of Democles.

- “ Love’s banquets are extravagantly sweet, 260
 “ And either kill or surfeit all that eat,
 “ Who, when the sated appetite is tir’d,
 “ Ev’n loath the thoughts of what they once admir’d.
 “ You’ve promis’d, Strephon, to forsake the charms
 “ Of Delia, tho’ she courts you to her arms; 265
 “ And sure I may your resolution trust;
 “ You’ll never want temptation, but be just.
 “ Vows of this nature, Youth! must not be broke;
 “ You’re always bound, tho’ ’tis a gentle yoke.
 “ Would men be wise, and my advice pursue, 270
 “ Love’s conquests would be small, his triumphs few;
 “ For nothing can oppose his tyranny
 “ With such a prospect of success as I.
 “ Me he detests, and from my presence flies,
 “ Who know his arts, and stratagems despise, 275
 “ By which he cancels mighty Wisdom’s rules,
 “ To make himself the deity of fools:
 “ Him dully they adore, him blindly serve;
 “ Some while they’re sots, and others while they starve;
 “ For those who under his wild conduct go, 280
 “ Either come coxcombs, or he makes ’em so:
 “ His charms deprive, by their strange influence,
 “ The brave of courage, and the wise of sense:
 “ In vain Philosophy would set the mind
 “ At liberty, if once by him confin’d: 285
 “ The scholar’s learning and the poet’s wit
 “ A while may struggle, but at last submit:
 “ Well-weigh’d results and wise conclusions seem
 “ But empty chat, impertinence to him:
 “ His opiates seize so strongly on the brain, 290
 “ They make all prudent application vain:
 “ If therefore you resolve to live at ease,
 “ To taste the sweetness of internal peace,
 “ Would not for safety to a battle fly,
 “ Or chuse a shipwreck if afraid to die; 295
 “ Far from these pleasurable shades remove,
 “ And leave the fond inglorious toil of Love.”

This said, she vanish’d; and methought I found
 Myself transported to a rising ground,

From whence I did a pleasant vale survey ; 300
 Large was the prospect, beautiful and gay ;
 There I beheld the apartments of delight,
 Whose curious forms oblig'd the wond'ring sight ;
 Some in full view upon the champaign plac'd,
 With lofty walls and cooling streams embrac'd ; 305
 Others in shady groves retir'd from noise,
 The seat of private and exalted joys :
 At a great distance I perceiv'd there stood
 A stately building in a spacious wood,
 Whose gilded turrets rais'd their beauteous heads 310
 High in the air, to view the neighb'ring meads,
 Where vulgar lovers spend their happy days
 In rustic dancing and delightful plays :
 But while I gaz'd with admiration round,
 I heard from far celestial music sound ; 315
 So soft, so moving, so harmonious, all
 The artful charming notes did rise and fall ;
 My soul, transported with the graceful airs,
 Shook off the pressures of its former fears ;
 I felt afresh the little god begin 320
 To stir himself, and gently move within ;
 Then I repented I had vow'd no more
 To love, or Delia's beauteous eyes adore.
 " Why am I now condemn'd to banishment,
 " And made an exile by my own content ?" 325
 I sighing cry'd : " Why should I live in pain
 " Those fleeting hours which ne'er return again ?
 " O Delia ! what can wretched Strephon do ?
 " Inhuman to himself, and false to you !
 " 'Tis true, I've promis'd Reason to remove 330
 " From these retreats, and quit bright Delia's love :
 " But is not Reason partially unkind ?
 " Are all her votaries, like me, confin'd ?
 " Must none, that under her dominion live,
 " To love and beauty veneration give ? 335
 " Why then did Nature youthful Delia grace
 " With a majestic mien and charming face ?
 " Why did she give her that surprising air,
 " Make her so gay, so witty, and so fair,

- “ Mistress of all that can affection move, 340
 “ If Reason will not suffer us to love?
 “ But since it must be so, I’ll haste away;
 “ ’Tis fatal to return, and death to stay.
 “ From you, blest’d Shades! (If I may call you so
 “ Inculpable) with mighty pain I go: 345
 “ Compell’d from hence, I leave my quiet here;
 “ I may find safety, but I buy it dear.”
 Then, turning round, I saw a beauteous boy,
 Such as of old were messengers of joy:
 “ Who art thou, or from whence? If sent,” said I,
 “ To me, my haste requires a quick reply.” 351
 “ I come,” he cry’d, “ from yon’ celestial grove,
 “ Where stands the temple of the God of Love,
 “ With whose important favour you are grac’d,
 “ And justly in his high protection plac’d. 355
 “ Be grateful, Strephon, and obey that god,
 “ Whose sceptre ne’er is chang’d into a rod;
 “ That god, to whom the haughty and the proud,
 “ The bold, the bravest, nay, the best, have bow’d;
 “ That god, whom all the lesser gods adore, 360
 “ First in existence and the first in pow’r:
 “ From him I come, on embassy divine,
 “ To tell thee, Delia, Delia may be thine;
 “ To whom all beauties rightful tribute pay;
 “ Delia, the young, the lovely, and the gay! 365
 “ If you dare push your fortune, if you dare
 “ But be resolv’d, and press the yielding fair,
 “ Success and glory will your labours crown,
 “ For Fate does rarely on the valiant frown:
 “ But were you sure to be unkindly us’d, 370
 “ Coldly receiv’d, and scornfully refus’d,
 “ He greater glory and more fame obtains
 “ Who loses Delia, than who Phyllis gains.
 “ But to prevent all fears that may arise,
 “ (Tho’ fears ne’er move the daring and the wise) 375
 “ In the dark volumes of eternal doom,
 “ Where all things past, and present, and to come,
 “ Are writ, I saw these words—“ It is decreed
 “ That Strephon’s love to Delia shall succeed.” 379

" What would you more ?—While youth and vigour
 " Love, and be happy ; they decline too fast. [last
 " In youth alone you're capable to prove
 " The mighty transports of a gen'rous love ;
 " For dull Old Age with fumbling labour cloy
 " Before the bliss, or give but wither'd joys. 385
 " Youth's the best time for action mortals have ;
 " That past, they touch the confines of the grave.
 " Now, if you hope to lie in Delia's arms,
 " To die in raptures, or dissolve in charms,
 " Quick to the blissful happy mansion fly, 390
 " Where all is one continu'd ecstasy ;
 " Delia impatiently expects you there,
 " And sure you will not disappoint the fair :
 " None but the impudent or old would stay
 " When love invites, and beauty calls away." 395
 " Oh ! you convey," said I, " dear charming Boy !
 " Into my soul a strange disorder'd joy.
 " I would, but dare not, your advise pursue,
 " I've promis'd Reason, and I must be true :
 " Reason's the rightful empress of the soul, 400
 " Does all exorbitant desires control,
 " Checks ev'ry wild excursion of the mind,
 " By her wise dictates happily confin'd ;
 " And he that will not her commands obey,
 " Leaves a safe convoy in a dang'rous sea. 405
 " True, I love Delia to a vast excess,
 " But I must try to make my passion less ;
 " Try if I can ; if possible I will ;
 " For I have vow'd, and must that vow fulfil.
 " Oh ! had I not, with what a vig'rous flight 410
 " Could I pursue the quarries of delight !
 " How could I press fair Delia in these arms,
 " Till I dissolv'd in love, and she in charms !
 " But now no more must I her beauties view,
 " Yet tremble at the thoughts to leave her too. 415
 " What would I give I might my flame allow,
 " But 'tis forbid by Reason and a vow,
 " Two mighty obstacles ; tho' love of old
 " Has broke thro' greater, stronger pow'rs controll'd.

- “ Should I offend, by high example taught, 420
 “ ’Twould not be an inexpressible fault :
 “ The crimes of malice have found grace above,
 “ And sure kind Heaven will spare the crimes of love.
 “ Couldst thou, my angel ! but instruct me how
 “ I might be happy, and not break my vow, 425
 “ Or by some subtle art dissolve the chain,
 “ You’d soon revive my dying hopes again.
 “ Reason and Love, I know, could ne’er agree ;
 “ Both would command, and both superior be.
 “ Reason’s supported by the sin’wy force 430
 “ Of solid argument and wise discourse ;
 “ But Love pretends to use no other arms
 “ Than soft impressions and persuasive charms:
 “ One must be disobey’d ; and shall I prove
 “ A rebel to my reason, or to love ? 435
 “ But then, suppose I should my flame pursue,
 “ Delia may be unkind and faithless too,
 “ Reject my passion with a proud disdain,
 “ And scorn the love of such an humble swain :
 “ Then should I labour under mighty grief, 440
 “ Beyond all hopes or prospect of relief ;
 “ So that, methinks, ’tis safer to obey
 “ Right Reason, though she bears a rugged sway,
 “ Than Love’s soft rule, whose subjects undergo,
 “ Early or late, too sad a share of woe. 445
 “ Can I so soon forget that wretched crew
 “ Reason just now expos’d before my view ?
 “ If Delia should be cruel, I must be
 “ A sad partaker of their misery.
 “ But your encouragements so strongly move, 450
 “ I’m almost tempted to pursue my love ;
 “ For sure no treacherous designs should dwell
 “ In one that argues and persuades so well ;
 “ For what could Love by my destruction gain ?
 “ Love’s an immortal god, and I a swain ; 455
 “ And sure I may, without suspicion, trust
 “ A god, for gods can never be unjust.”
 “ Right you conclude,” reply’d the smiling boy,
 “ Love ruins none ; ’tis men themselves destroy ;

- “ And those vile wretches which you lately saw, 460
“ Transgress'd his rules as well as Reason's law :
“ They're not Love's subjects, but the slaves of Lust ;
“ Nor is their punishment so great as just :
“ For Love and Lust essentially divide,
“ Like day and night, humility and pride : 465
“ One darkness hides, t'other does always shine ;
“ This of infernal make, and that divine.
“ Reason, no gen'rous passion does oppose ;
“ 'Tis Lust (not Love) and Reason that are foes :
“ She bids you scorn a base inglorious flame, 470
“ Black as the gloomy shade from whence it came :
“ In this her precepts should obedience find,
“ But your's is not of that ignoble kind.
“ You err in thinking she would disapprove
“ The brave pursuit of honourable love, 475
“ And therefore judge what's harmless an offence,
“ Invert her meaning, and mistake her sense.
“ She could not such insipid counsel give
“ As not to love at all ; 'tis not to live ;
“ But where bright virtue and true beauty lies, 480
“ As in fair Delia, charming Delia's eyes !
“ Could you, contented, see th' angelic maid
“ In old Alexis' dull embraces laid ?
“ Or rough-hewn Tityrus possess those charms
“ Which are in heaven, the heaven of Delia's arms ?
“ Consider Youth ! what transport you forego, 486
“ The most entire felicity below,
“ Which is by Fate alone reserv'd for you ;
“ Monarchs have been deny'd, for monarchs sue.
“ I own 'tis difficult to gain the prize, 490
“ Or 'twould be cheap and low in noble eyes ;
“ But there is one soft minute, when the mind
“ Is left unguarded, waiting to be kind,
“ Which the wise lover understanding right,
“ Steals in like day upon the wings of light. 495
“ You urge your vow ; but can those vows prevail
“ Whose first foundation and whose reason fail ?
“ You vow'd to leave fair Delia, but you thought
“ Your passion was a crime, your flame a fault :

“ But since your judgment err’d, it has no force 500

“ To bind at all, but is dissolv’d of course ;

“ And therefore hesitate no longer here,

“ But banish all the dull remains of fear.

“ Dare you be happy Youth ! but dare, and be ;

“ I’ll be your convoy to the charming she. 505

“ What ! still irresolute ? debating still ?

“ View her, and then forsake her if you will.”

“ I’ll go,” said I ; “ once more I’ll venture all ;

“ ’Tis brave to perish by a noble fall.

“ Beauty no mortal can resist, and Jove 510

“ Laid by his grandeur to indulge his love.

“ Reason ! If I do err, my crime forgive ;

“ Angels alone without offending live.

“ I go astray but as the wise have done,

“ And act a folly which they did not shun.” 515

Then we, descending to a spacious plain,

Were soon saluted by a num’rous train

Of happy lovers, who consum’d their hours

With constant jollity in shady bow’rs.

There I beheld the bless’d variety 520

Of joy, from all corroding troubles free :

Each follow’d his own fancy to delight ;

Tho’ all went diff’rent ways, yet all went right.

None err’d, or mis’d the happiness he sought ;

Love to one centre ev’ry twining brought. 525

We pass’d thro’ num’rous pleasant fields and glades,

By murm’ring fountains and by peaceful shades,

Till we approach’d the confines of the wood,

Where, mighty Love’s immortal temple stood.

Round the celestial fane, in goodly rows, 530

And beauteous order, am’rous myrtle grows,

Beneath whose shade expecting lovers wait

For the kind minute of indulgent Fate :

Each had his guardian Cupid, whose chief care,

By secret motions, was to warm the fair ; 535

To kindle eager longings for the joy ;

To move the slow, and to incline the coy.

The glorious fabric charm’d my wond’ring sight,

Of vast extent and of prodigious height :

The case was marble, but the polish'd stone 540
 With such an admirable lustre shone,
 As if some architect divine had strove
 T' outdo the palace of imperial Jove.

The pond'rous gates of massy gold were made,
 With di'monds of a mighty size inlaid : 545

Here stood the winged guards, in order plac'd,
 With shining darts and golden quivers grac'd :
 As we approach'd, they clapp'd their joyful wings,
 And cry'd aloud, " Tune, tune your warbling strings ;
 " The grateful youth is come to sacrifice 550

" At Delia's altar to bright Delia's eyes :
 " With harmony divine his soul inspire,
 " That he may boldly touch the sacred fire :
 " And ye that wait upon the blushing fair,
 " Celestial incense and perfumes prepare, 555
 " While our great god her panting bosom warms,
 " Refines her beauties, and improves her charms."

Ent'ring the spacious dome, my ravish'd eyes
 A wond'rous scene of glory did surprise ;
 The riches, symmetry, and brightness, all 560
 Did equally for admiration call ;
 But the description is a labour fit
 For none beneath a laureat angel's wit.

Amidst the temple was an altar made
 Of solid gold, where adoration's paid : 565
 Here I perform'd the usual rites with fear,
 Not daring boldly to approach too near,
 Till from the god a smiling Cupid came,
 And bid me touch the consecrated flame ;
 Which done, my guide my eager steps convey'd, 570
 To the apartment of the beauteous maid.

Before the entrance was her altar rais'd,
 On pedestals of polish'd marble plac'd ;
 By it her guardian Cupid always stands,
 Who troops of missionary Loves commands : 575
 To him, with soft addresses all repair ;
 Each for his captive humbly begs the fair,
 Tho' still in vain they importun'd ; for he
 Would give encouragement to none but me. 579



POMFRET.

Then he exposed the lovely sleeping maid
Upon a couch of new blown roses laid.

Vide Page 27 line 597

"There stands the youth," he cry'd, "must take the
 "The lovely Delia can be none but his : [bliss,
 "Fate has selected him ; and mighty Love
 "Confirms below, what that decrees above.
 "Then press no more ; there's not another swain
 "On earth, but Strephon, can bright Delia gain. 585
 "Kneel, Youth ! and with a grateful mind renew
 "Your vows ; swear you'll eternally be true :
 "But if you dare be false, dare perjur'd prove,
 "You'll find, in sure revenge, affronted Love
 "As hot, as fierce, as terrible as Jove." 590
 "Hear me, ye Gods !" said I, "now hear me swear,
 "By all that's sacred, and by all that's fair !
 "If I prove false to Delia, let me fall
 "The common obloquy, condemn'd by all ;
 "Let me the utmost of your vengeance try, 595
 "Forc'd to live wretched, and unpity'd die."

Then he expos'd the lovely sleeping maid,
 Upon a couch of new-blown roses laid :
 The blushing colour in her cheeks express'd
 What tender thoughts inspir'd her heaving breast. 600
 Sometimes a sigh, half smother'd, stole away, [say :
 Then she would "Shrephon, charming Strephon !"
 Sometimes she, smiling, cry'd, "You love, 'tis true ;
 "But will you always, and be faithful too ?"
 Ten thousand graces play'd about her face, 605
 Ten thousand charms attended ev'ry grace :
 Each admirable feature did impart
 A secret rapture to my throbbing heart.
 The nymph * imprison'd in the Brazen Tow'r,
 When Jove descended in a golden show'r, 610
 Less beautiful appear'd, and yet her eyes
 Brought down that god from the neglected skies.
 So moving, so transporting, was the sight,
 So much a goddess Delia seem'd, so bright,
 My ravish'd soul, with secret wonder fraught, 615
 Lay all dissolv'd in ecstasy of thought.

Long time I gaz'd ; but as I, trembling, drew
 Nearer, to take a more obliging view,

* Danae.

It thunder'd loud, and the ungrateful noise
Wak'd me, and put an end to all my joys.

620

THE FORTUNATE COMPLAINT.

AS Strephon, in a wither'd cypress shade,
 For anxious thought and sighing lovers made,
 Revolving lay upon his wretched state,
 And the hard usage of too partial Fate,
 Thus the sad youth complain'd: "Once happy swain,
 "Now the most abject shepherd of the plain! 6
 "Where's that harmonious concert of delights,
 "Those peaceful days and pleasurable nights,
 "That gen'rous mirth and noble jollity,
 "Which gaily made the dancing minutes fly? 10
 "Dispers'd, and banish'd from my troubled breast,
 "Nor leave me one short interval of rest.
 "Why do I prosecute a hopeless flame,
 "And play in torment such a losing game?
 "All things conspire to make my ruin sure; 15
 "When wounds are mortal they admit no cure:
 "But Heav'n sometimes does a mirac'lous thing,
 "When our last hope is just upon the wing,
 "And in a moment drives those clouds away
 "Whose sullen darkness hid a glorious day. 20
 "Why was I born? or why do I survive?
 "To be made wretched only kept alive?
 "Fate is too cruel in the harsh decree,
 "That I must live, yet live in misery.
 "Are all its pleasing happy moments gone? 25
 "Must Strephon be unfortunate alone?
 "On other swains it lavishly bestows;
 "On them each nymph neglected favour throws;
 "They meet compliance still in ev'ry face,
 "And lodge their passions in a kind embrace, 30
 "Obtaining from the soft incurious maid,
 "True love for counterfeit, and gold for lead.
 "Success on Mævius always does attend;
 "Inconstant Fortune is his constant friend;
 "He levels blindly, yet the mark does hit, 35
 "And owes the victory to chance, not wit:

- “ But let him conquer ere one blow be struck ;
 “ I’d not be Mævius to have Mævius’ luck :
 “ Proud of my fate, I would not change my chains
 “ For all the trophies purring Mævius gains, 40
 “ But rather still live Delia’s slave, than be
 “ Like Mævius silly, and like Mævius free.
 “ But he is happy, loves the common road,
 “ And pack-horse like, jogs on beneath his load :
 “ If Phillis peevish or unkind does prove, 45
 “ It ne’er disturbs his grave mechanic love.
 “ A little joy his languid flame contents,
 “ And makes him easy under all events :
 “ But when a passion’s noble and sublime,
 “ And higher still would ev’ry moment climb, 50
 “ If ’tis accepted with a just return,
 “ The fire’s immortal, will for ever burn,
 “ And with such raptures fills the lover’s breast,
 “ That faints in Paradise are scarce more blest.
 “ But I lament my miseries in vain, 55
 “ For Delia hears me pitiless complain.
 “ Suppose she pities, and believes me true,
 “ What satisfaction can from thence accrue,
 “ Unless her pity makes her love me too ?
 “ Perhaps she loves, (’tis but perhaps, I fear, 60
 “ For that’s a blessing can’t be bought too dear)
 “ If she has scruples that oppose her will,
 “ I must, alas ! be miserable still ;
 “ Though, if she loves, those scruples soon will fly
 “ Before the reas’ning of the deity ; 65
 “ For where Love enters he will rule alone,
 “ And suffer no co-partner in his throne ;
 “ And those false arguments that would repel
 “ His high injunctions, teach us to rebel.
 “ What method can poor Strephon then propound
 “ To cure the bleeding of his fatal wound, 71
 “ If she who guided the vexatious dart
 “ Resolves to cherish and increase the smart ?
 “ Go, youth, from these unhappy plains remove,
 “ Leave the pursuit of unsuccessful love ; 75

" Go, and to foreign swains thy griefs relate :
 " Tell 'em the cruelty of frowning Fate ;
 " Tell 'em the noble charms of Delia's mind ;
 " Tell 'em how fair, but tell 'em how unkind ;
 " And when few years thou hast in sorrow spent, 80
 " (For sure they cannot be of large extent)
 " In pray'rs for her thou lov'st resign thy breath,
 " And bleſs the minute gives thee eaſe and death."

Here paus'd the ſwain—when Delia, driving by
 Her bleating flock to ſome freſh paſture nigh. 85

By love directed, did her ſteps convey
 Where Strephon, wrapp'd in ſilent ſorrow lay.
 As ſoon as he perceiv'd the beauteous maid,
 He roſe to meet her, and thus, trembling, ſaid :

" When humble ſuppliants would the gods appeaſe,
 " And in ſevere afflictions beg for eaſe, - 91
 " With conſtant importunity they ſue,
 " And their petitions ev'ry day renew.

" Grow ſtill more earneſt as they are deny'd,
 " Nor one well-weigh'd expedient leave untry'd, 95
 " 'Till Heav'n thoſe bleſſings they enjoy'd before
 " Not only does return, but gives 'em more.

" O ! do not blame me, Delia, if I preſs
 " So much, and with impatience, for redreſs :
 " My pond'rous griefs no eaſe my ſoul allow, 100
 " For they are next t' intolerable now :

" How ſhall I then ſupport 'em when they grow
 " To an exceſs, to a diſtracting woe ?
 " Since you're endow'd with a celeftial mind,
 " Relieve like Heav'n, and, like the gods, be kind,
 " Did you perceive the torments I endure, 106

" Which you firſt caus'd, and you alone can cure,
 " They would your virgin ſoul to pity move,
 " And pity may at laſt be chang'd to love.

" Some ſwains, I own, impoſe upon the fair, 110
 " And lead th' incautious maid into a ſnare ;
 " But let them ſuffer for their perjury,

" And do not puniſh others crimes in me.
 " If there's ſo many of our ſex untrue,
 " Your's ſhould more kindly uſe the faithful few ; 115

- “ Tho’ innocence too oft incurs the fate
“ Of guilt, and clears itself sometimes too late.
“ Your nature is to tenderness inclin’d ;
“ And why to me, to me alone, unkind ?
“ A common love, by other persons shown, 120
“ Meets with a full return, but mine has none ;
“ Nay, scarce believ’d, tho’ from deceit as free
“ As angels’ flames can for archangels be.
“ A passion feign’d at no repulse is griev’d,
“ And values little if it ben’t receiv’d ; 125
“ But love sincere resents the smallest scorn,
“ And the unkindness does in secret mourn.
“ Sometimes I please myself, and think you are
“ Too good to make me wretched by despair ;
“ That tenderness which in your soul is plac’d, 130
“ Will move you to compassion sure at last :
“ But when I come to take a second view
“ Of my own merits, I despond of you ;
“ For what can Delia, beauteous Delia ! see
“ To raise in her the least esteem for me ? 135
“ I’ve nought that can encourage my address ;
“ My Fortune’s little, and my worth is less :
“ But if a love of the sublimest kind
“ Can make impression on a generous mind,
“ If all has real value that’s divine, 140
“ There cannot be a nobler flame than mine.
“ Perhaps you pity me ; I know you must,
“ And my affection can no more distrust :
“ But what, alas ! will hapless pity do ?
“ You pity, but you may despise me too. 145
“ Still I am wretched if no more you give ;
“ The starving orphan can’t on pity live ;
“ He must receive the food for which he cries,
“ Or he consumes, and, tho’ much pity’d, dies.
“ My torments still do with my passions grow, 150
“ The more I love, the more I undergo :
“ But suffer me no longer to remain
“ Beneath the pressure of so vast a pain :
“ My wound requires some speedy remedy ;
“ Delays are fatal when despair is nigh. 155

" Much I've endur'd, much more than I can tell ;
 " Too much, indeed, for one that loves so well.
 " When will the end of all my sorrows be ?
 " Can you not love ? I'm sure you pity me :
 " But if I must new miseries sustain, 160
 " And be condemn'd to more and stronger pain,
 " I'll not accuse you since my fate is such ;
 " I please too little, and I love too much."
 " Strephon, no more," the blushing Delia said ;
 " Excuse the conduct of a tim'rous maid : 165
 " Now I'm convinc'd your love's sublime and true,
 " Such as I always wish'd to find in you :
 " Each kind expression, ev'ry tender thought,
 " A mighty transport in my bosom wrought ;
 " And tho' in secret I your flame approv'd, 170
 " I sigh'd and griev'd, but durst not own I lov'd :
 " Tho' now—O Strephon ! be so kind to guess
 " What shame will not allow me to confess."

The youth, encompass'd with a joy so bright,
 Had hardly strength to bear the vast delight : 175
 By too sublime an ecstasy possess'd,
 He trembl'd, gaz'd, and clasp'd her to his breast ;
 Ador'd the nymph that did his pain remove,
 Vow'd endless truth and everlasting love. 179

A PASTORAL ESSAY

ON THE DEATH OF QUEEN MARY.

AS gentle Strephon to his fold convey'd
 A wand'ring lamb, which from the flocks had
 Beneath a mournful cypress shade he found [stray'd
 Cosmelia weeping on the dewy ground :
 Amaz'd, with eager haste he ran to know 5
 The fatal cause of her intemp'rate woe,
 And clasping her to his impatient breast,
 In these soft words his tender care express'd :

STREPH. Why mourns my dear Cosmelia ? why ap-
 My life, my soul, dissolv'd in briny tears ? [pears
 Has some fierce tiger thy lov'd heifer slain, 11
 While I was wand'ring on the neighb'ring plain ?
 Or has some greedy wolf devour'd thy sheep ?
 What sad misfortune makes Cosmelia weep ?

Speak, that I may prevent thy grief's increase, 15
Partake thy sorrows, or restore thy peace.

Cos. Do you not hear from far that mournful bell?

'Tis for—I cannot the sad tidings tell.

Oh! whither are thy fainting spirits fled!

'Tis for Celestia—Strephon, oh!—she's dead! 20

The brightest nymph, the princess of the plain,

By an untimely dart untimely slain!

STREPH. Dead! 'tis impossible! she cannot die!

She's too divine, too much a deity:

'Tis a false rumour some ill swains have spread 25

Who wish, perhaps, the good Celestia dead.

Cos. Ah! no; the truth in ev'ry face appears,

For ev'ry face you meet's o'erflow'd with tears.

Trembling and pale I ran thro' all the plain,

From flock to flock, and ask'd of ev'ry swain, 30

But each, scarce lifting his dejected head,

Cry'd, "Oh! Cosmelia; oh! Celestia's dead."

STREPH. Something was meant by that ill boding
Of the prophetic raven from the oak, [croak

Which straight by lightning was in shivers broke; 35

But we our mischief feel before we see,

Seiz'd and o'erwhelm'd at once with misery.

Cos. Since then we have no trophies to bestow,

No pompous things to make a glorious show,

(For all the tribute a poor swain can bring, 40

In rural numbers is to mourn and sing)

Let us beneath the gloomy shade rehearse

Celestia's sacred name in no less sacred verse.

STREPH. Celestia dead! then 'tis in vain to live;

What's all the comfort that the plains can give, 45

Since she, by whose bright influence alone

Our flocks increas'd, and we rejoic'd, is gone?

Since she, who round such beams of goodness spread

As gave new life to ev'ry swain, is dead?

Cos. in vain we wish for the delightful spring; 50

What joys can flow'ry May or April bring,

When she, for whom the spacious plains were spread

With early flow'rs and cheerful greens, is dead?

In vain did courtly Damon warm the earth,
 To give to summer fruits a winter birth; 55
 In vain we autumn wait, which crowns the fields
 With wealthy crops, and various plenty yields;
 Since that fair nymph, for whom the boundless store
 Of Nature has preserv'd, is now no more.

STREPH. Farewel for ever then to all that's gay; 60
 You will forget to sing and I to play:
 No more with cheerful songs, in cooling bow'rs,
 Shall we consume the pleasurable hours:
 All joys are banish'd, all delights are fled,
 Ne'er to return, now fair Celestia's dead! 65

Cos. If e'er I sing, they shall be mournful lays
 Of great Celestia's name, Celestia's praise;
 How good she was, how generous, how wise!
 How beautiful her shape, how bright her eyes!
 How charming all! how much she was ador'd 70
 Alive;—when dead, how much her loss deplor'd!
 A noble theme, and able to inspire
 The humblest Muse with the sublimest fire.
 And since we do of such a princess sing,
 Let ours ascend upon a stronger wing, 75
 And while we do the lofty numbers join,
 Her name will make the harmony divine.
 Raise, then, thy tuneful voice, and be the song
 Sweet as her temper, as her virtue strong. 79

STREPH. When her great Lord to foreign wars was
 And left Celestia here to rule alone, [gone,
 With how serene a brow, how void of fear,
 When storms arose, did she the vessel steer!
 And when the raging of the waves did cease,
 How gentle was her sway in times of peace! 85
 Justice and Mercy did their beams unite,
 And round her temples spread a glorious light:
 So quick she eas'd the wrongs of ev'ry swain,
 She hardly gave them leisure to complain:
 Impatient to reward, but slow to draw
 Th' avenging sword of necessary law; 90
 Like Heav'n, she took no pleasure to destroy;
 With grief she punish'd, and she sav'd with joy.

Cos. When godlike Belliger, from wars alarms,
 Return'd in triumph to Celestia's arms, 95
 She met her hero with a full desire,
 But chaste as light, and vigorous as fire :
 Such mutual flames, so equally divine,
 Did in each breast with such a lustre shine,
 His could not seem the greater, hers the less ; 100
 Both were immense, for both were in excess.

STREPH. Oh ! godlike princess ! oh ! thrice happy
 While she presided o'er the fruitful plains ! [swains !
 While she, for ever ravish'd from our eyes,
 To mingle with her kindred of the skies 105
 Did for your peace her constant thoughts employ,
 The nymphs good angel and the shepherds joy !

Cos. All that was noble beautified her mind ;
 There Wisdom sat, with solid Reason join'd ;
 There, too, did Piety and Greatness wait, 110
 Meekness on Grandeur, Modesty on State :
 Humble amidst the splendours of a throne,
 Plac'd above all, and yet despising none ;
 And when a crown was forc'd on her by Fate,
 She with some pain submitted to be great. 115

STREPH. Her pious soul with emulation strove
 To gain the mighty Pan's important love.
 To whose mysterious rites she always came
 With such an active so intense a flame,
 The duties of religion seem'd to be 120
 No more her care than her felicity.

Cos. Virtue unmix'd, without the least allay,
 Pure as the light of a celestial ray,
 Commanded all the motions of the soul
 With such a soft but absolute control, 125
 That as she knew what best great Pan would please,
 She still perform'd it with the greatest ease ;
 Him for her high exemplar she design'd,
 Like him benevolent to all mankind.
 Her foes she pity'd, nor desir'd their blood, 130
 And, to revenge their crimes, she did them good ;
 Nay, all affronts so unconcern'd she bore,
 (Maugre that violent temptation pow'r)

As if she thought it vulgar to resent,
Or wish'd forgiveness their worst punishment. 135

STREPH. Next mighty Pan was her illustrious lord,
His high vicegerent, sacredly ador'd;
Him with such piety and zeal she lov'd,
The noble passion ev'ry hour improv'd,
Till it ascended to that glorious height, 140
'Twas next (if only next) to infinite:
This made her so entire a duty pay,
She grew at last impatient to obey,
And met his wishes with as prompt a zeal
As an archangel his Creator's will. 145

Cos. Mature for heaven, the fatal mandate came,
With it a chariot of ethereal flame,
In which, Elijah like, she pass'd the spheres,
Brought joy to heaven, but left the world in tears.

STREPH. Methinks I see her on the plains of light
All glorious, all incomparably bright! 151
While the immortal minds around her gaze
On the excessive splendour of her rays,
And scarce believe a human soul could be
Endow'd with such stupendous majesty. 155

Cos. Who can lament too much! O! who can mourn
Enough o'er beautiful Celestia's urn?
So great a loss as this deserves excess
Of sorrow; all's too little that is less.
But to supply the universal woe, 160
Tears from all eyes, without cessation, flow;
All that have power to weep, or voice to groan,
With throbbing breasts Celestia's fate bemoan;
While marble rocks the common griefs partake,
And echo back those cries they cannot make. 165

STREPH. Weep then, (once fruitful) vales! and
spring with yew,
Ye thirsty barren mountains! weep with dew;
Let ev'ry flow'r on this extended plain
Not droop, but shrink into its womb again,
Ne'er to receive anew its yearly birth; 170
Let ev'ry thing that's grateful leave the earth;

ON THE MARRIAGE OF THE EARL OF A— &c. 37
Let mournful cypress, with each noxious weed,
And baneful venoms in their place succeed.
Ye purling quer'lous brooks! o'ercharg'd with grief,
Haste swiftly to the sea for more relief; 175
Then tiding back, each to his sacred head,
Tell your astonish'd springs Celestia's dead!

Cos. Well have you sung, in an exalted strain,
The fairest nymph e'er grac'd the British plain.
Who knows but some officious angel may 180
Your grateful numbers to her ears convey,
That she may smile upon us from above,
And bless our mournful plains with peace and love?

STREPH. But see! our flocks do to their folds repair,
For night with sable clouds obscures the air; 185
Cold damps descend from the unwholesome sky,
And safety bids us to our cottage fly.
Tho' with each morn our sorrows will return,
Each ev'n, like nightingales, we'll sing and mourn,
Till death conveys us to the peaceful urn. 190

ON THE MARRIAGE OF
THE EARL OF A——
WITH THE COUNTESS OF S——

TRIUMPHANT beauty never looks so gay
As on the morning of a nuptial day;
Love then within a larger circle moves,
New graces adds, and ev'ry charm improves.
While Hymen does his sacred rites prepare, 5
The busy nymphs attend the trembling fair,
Whose veins are swell'd with an unusual heat,
And eager pulses with strange motions beat;
Alternate passions various thoughts impart,
And painful joys distend her throbbing heart; 10
Her fears are great, and her desires are strong;
The minutes fly too fast—yet stay too long;
Now she is ready—the next moment not;
All things are done—then something is forgot:
She fears—yet wishes the strange work were done; 15
Delays—yet is impatient to be gone.

Disorders that from ev'ry thought arise;
 What Love persuades I know not what denies.

Achates' choice does his firm judgment prove,
 And shews at once he can be wise, and love, 20
 Because it from no spurious passion came,
 But was the product of a noble flame;
 Bold without rudeness, without blazing, bright,
 Pure as fix'd stars, and uncorrupt as light,
 By just degrees it to perfection grew, 25
 An early ripeness, and a lasting too.

So the bright sun, ascending to his noon,
 Moves not too slowly, nor is there too soon.

But tho' Achates was unkindly driv'n
 From his own land, he's banish'd into heav'n; 30
 For sure the raptures of Cosmelia's love
 Are next, if only next, to those above.

Thus pow'r divine does with his foes engage,
 Rewards his virtues, and defeats their rage;
 For first it did to fair Cosmelia give 35
 All that a human creature could receive;
 Whate'er can raise our wonder or delight,
 Transport the soul, or gratify the sight,
 Then, in the full perfection of her charms,
 Lodg'd the bright virgin in Achates' arms. 40

What angels are, is in Cosmelia seen,
 Their awful glories, and their godlike mein;
 For in her aspect all the graces meet,
 All that is noble, beautiful, or sweet;
 There ev'ry charm in lofty triumph sits, 45
 Scorns poor defect, and to no fault submits;
 There symmetry, complexion, air, unite;
 Sublimely noble, and amazing bright.
 So, newly finish'd by the hand divine,
 Before her fall did the first woman shine: 50
 But Eve in one great point she does excel;
 Cosmelia never err'd at all; she fell:
 From her temptation, in despair, withdrew,
 Nor more assaults whom it could ne'er subdue.
 Virtue confirm'd, and regularly brought 55
 To full maturity by serious thought,

Her actions with a watchful eye surveys,
 Each passion guides, and ev'ry moment sways:
 Not the least failure in her conduct lies,
 So gaily modest, and so freely wise.

60

Her judgment sure, impartial and refin'd,
 With wit that's clear and penetrating join'd,
 O'er all the efforts of her mind presides,
 And to the noblest end her labours guides:
 She knows the best, and does the best pursue,
 And treads the maze of life without a clue;
 That the weak only and the wav'ring lack,
 When they're mistaken, to conduct 'em back:
 She does, amidst ten thousand ways, prefer
 The right, as if not capable to err.

65

70

Her fancy, strong, vivacious, and sublime,
 Seldom betrays his converse to a crime,
 And tho' it moves with a luxuriant heat,
 'Tis ne'er precipitous, but always great;
 For each expression, ev'ry teeming thought,
 Is to the scanning of her judgment brought,
 Which wisely separates the finest gold,
 And casts the image in a beauteous mould.

75

No trifling words debase her eloquence,
 But all's pathetic, all is sterling sense,
 Refin'd from drossy chat and idle noise,
 With which the female conversation cloy:
 So well she knows, what's understood by few,
 To time her thoughts, and to express 'em too,
 That what she speaks does to the soul transmit
 The fair ideas of delightful wit.

80

85

Illustrious born, and as illustrious bred,
 By great example to wise actions led,
 Much to the fame her lineal heroes bore
 She owes, but to her own high genius more;
 And by a noble emulation mov'd,
 Excell'd their virtues, and her own improv'd,
 Till they arriv'd to that celestial height,
 Scarce angels greater be, or saints so bright.

90

But if Cosmelia could yet lovelier be,
 Of nobler birth, or more a deity,
 Achates merits her, tho' none but he,
 Whose gen'rous soul abhors a base disguise,
 Resolv'd in action, and in council wise;
 Too well confirm'd and fortify'd within
 For threats to force, or flattery to win;
 Unmov'd amidst the hurricane he stood;
 He dare be guiltless, and he will be good.

95

100

Since the first pair in Paradise were join'd,
 Two hearts were ne'er so happily combin'd.
 Achates life to fair Cosmelia gives;
 In fair Cosmelia great Achates lives:
 Each is to other the divinest bliss;
 He is her heaven, and she is more than his.
 Oh! may the kindest influence above
 Protect their persons, and indulge their love!

105

111

AN INSCRIPTION

FOR THE MONUMENT OF DIANA.

Countess of Oxford and Elgin.

DIANA OXONII ET ELGINI COMITISSA,

Quæ

Illustri orta sanguine, sanguinem illustravit:
 Ceciliorem meritis, clara, suis clarissima;
 Ut quæ nesciret minor esse maximis.

Vitam ineuntem innocentia;

Procedentem ampla virtutum cohors:

Exeuntem mors beatissima decoravit;

(Volente Numine)

Ut nusquam deesset aut virtus aut felicitas.

Duobus conjuncta maritis,

Utrique charissima:

Primum

(Quem ad annum habuit)

Impense dilexit:

Secundum

(Quem ad annos viginti quatuor)

Tanta pietate et amore coluit;

5

10

15

Ut qui, vivens,
 Obsequium tanquam patri præstitit;
 Moriens,
 Patrimonium, tanquam filio, reliquit. 20
 Noverca cum esset,
 Maternam pietatem facile superavit.
 Famulitii adeo mitem prudentemque curam gessit,
 Ut non tam Domina familiæ præesse,
 Quam anima corpori inesse videretur. 25
 Denique,
 Cum pudico, humili, forti, sancto animo,
 Virginibus, conjugibus, viduis, omnibus,
 Exemplum consecrasset integerrimum,
 Terris anima major, ad similes evolavit superos. 30

THE FOREGOING INSCRIPTION.

ATTEMPTED IN ENGLISH.

DIANA COUNTESS OF OXFORD AND ELGIN,
 Who from a race of noble heroes came,
 And added lustre to its ancient fame;
 Round her the virtues of the Cecils shone,
 But with inferior brightness to her own,
 Which she refin'd to that sublime degree, 5
 The greatest mortal could not greater be.
 Each stage of life peculiar splendour had;
 Her tender years with innocence were clad;
 Maturer grown, whate'er was brave and good
 In the retinue of her virtues stood; 10
 And at the final period of her breath,
 She crown'd her life with a propitious death.
 That no occasion might be wanting here
 To make her virtues fam'd or joys sincere,
 Two noble lords her genial bed possess, 15
 A wife to both the dearest and the best:
 Oxford submitted in one year to Fate,
 For whom her passion was exceeding great;
 To Elgin full six *lustra* were assign'd,
 And him she lov'd with so intense a mind, 20

That, living, like a father she obey'd;
 Dying, as to a son, left all she had.
 When a stepmother, she soon soar'd above
 The common height e'en of maternal love.
 She did her num'rous family command 25
 With such a tender care, so wise a hand,
 She seem'd no otherwise a mistress there,
 Than godlike souls in human bodies are:
 But when to all she had example shew'd,
 How to be great and humble, chaste and good, 30
 Her soul, for earth too excellent, too high,
 Flew to its peers, the princes of the sky. 32

ELEAZAR'S LAMENTATION OVER JERUSALEM.

PARAPHRASED OUT OF JOSEPHUS.

ALAS! Jerusalem! alas! where's now
 Thy pristine glory, thy unmatched renown,
 To which the heathen monarchies did bow?
 Ah! hapless, miserable town!
 Where's all thy majesty, thy beauty, gone? 5
 Thou once most noble, celebrated place,
 The joy and the delight of all the earth,
 Who gav'st to godlike princes birth,
 And bred up heroes, an immortal race,
 Where's now the vast magnificence which made 10
 The souls of foreigners adore
 Thy wond'rous brightness, which no more
 Shall shine, but lie in an eternal shade?
 Oh! misery! where's all her mighty state,
 Her splendid train of num'rous kings, 15
 Her noble edifices, noble things,
 Which made her seem so eminently great,
 That barb'rous princes in her gates appear'd,
 And wealthy presents, as their tribute, brought
 To court her friendship? for her strength they fear'd,
 And all her wide protection sought. 21
 But now, ah! now they laugh and cry,
 "See how her lofty buildings lie!
 "See how her flaming turrets gild the sky!"

II.

Where's all the young, the valiant, and the gay, 25
 That on her festivals were us'd to play
 Harmonious tunes, and beautify the day?
 The glitt'ring troops, which did from far
 Bring home the trophies and the spoils of war,
 Whom all the nations round with terrors view'd, 30
 Nor durst their godlike valour try?
 Where'er they fought they certainly subdu'd,
 And ev'ry combat gain'd a victory.
 Ah! where's the house of the Eternal King,
 The beauteous temple of the Lord of Hosts, 35
 To whose large treasuries our fleets did bring
 The gold and jewels of remotest coasts?
 There had the infinite Creator plac'd
 His terrible, amazing name,
 And with his more peculiar presence grac'd 40
 That heav'nly *Sanctum* where no mortal came,
 The high-priest only; he but once a-year
 In that divine apartment might appear;
 So full of glory, and so sacred, then; 44
 But now corrupted with the heaps of slain [fane.
 Which, scatter'd round with blood, defile the mighty

III.

Alas! Jerusalem! each spacious street
 Was once so fill'd, the num'rous throng
 Was forc'd to jostle as they pass'd along,
 And thousands did with thousands meet; 50
 The darling then of God, and man's belov'd retreat.
 In thee was the bright throne of Justice fix'd,
 Justice impartial, and with fraud unmix'd.
 She scorn'd the beauties of fallacious gold,
 Despising the most wealthy bribes, 55
 But did the sacred balance hold
 With godlike faith to all our happy tribes.
 Thy well-built streets, and ev'ry noble square,
 Were once with polish'd marble laid,
 And all thy lofty bulwarks made 60
 With wond'rous labour and with artful care.

Thy pond'rous gates, surprising to behold,
 Were cover'd o'er with solid gold,
 Whose splendour did so glorious appear,
 It ravish'd and amaz'd the eye,
 And strangers passing, to themselves would cry,
 "What mighty heaps of wealth are here!
 "How thick the bars of massy silver lie!
 "O happy people! and still happy be,
 "Celestial city! from destruction free,
 "May'st thou enjoy a long entire prosperity!"

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IV.

But now, O! wretched, wretched place!
 Thy streets and palaces are spread
 With heaps of carcases, and mountains of the dead,
 The bleeding relics of the Jewish race:
 Each corner of the town, no vacant space,
 But is with breathless bodies fill'd,
 Some by the sword, and some by famine kill'd.
 Natives and strangers are together laid:
 Death's arrows all at random flew
 Amongst the crowd, and no distinction made,
 But both the coward and the valiant flew.
 All in one dismal ruin join'd,
 (For swords and pestilence are blind)
 The fair, the good, the brave, no mercy find.
 Those that from far, with joyful haste,
 Came to attend thy festival,
 Of the same bitter poison taste,
 And by the black destructive poison fall,
 For the avenging sentence pass'd on all.
 Oh! see how the delight of human eyes
 In horrid desolation lies!
 See how the burning ruins flame,
 Nothing now left but a sad empty name,
 And the triumphant victor cries,
 "This was the fam'd Jerusaleml!"

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V.

The most obdurate creature must
 Be griev'd to see thy palaces in dust,
 Those ancient habitations of the just;

And could the marble rocks but know
The mis'ries of thy fatal overthrow,
They'd strive to find some secret way unknown,
Maugre the senseless nature of the stone,
Their pity and concern to show:
For now where lofty buildings stood
Thy sons' corrupted carcases are laid,
And all by this destruction made
One common Golgotha, one field of blood.
See how those ancient men who rul'd thy state
And made thee happy, made thee great,
Who sat upon the awful chair
Of mighty Moses, in long scarlet clad,
The good to cherish and chastise the bad,
Now sit in the corrupted air,
In silent melancholy, and in sad despair!
See how the murder'd children round 'em lie!
Ah! dismal scene! hark, how they cry!
"Woe! woe! one beam of mercy give,
"Good heaven! Alas! for we would live!
"Be pitiful and suffer us to die!"
Thus they lament, thus beg for ease,
While in their feeble aged arms they hold
The bodies of their offspring stiff and cold,
To guard 'em from the rav'nous savages,
Till their increasing sorrows death persuade
(For death must sure with pity see
The horrid desolation he has made)
To put a period to their misery.
Thy wretched daughters that survive
Are by the heathen kept alive
Only to gratify their lust,
And then be mixed with the common dust.
Oh! insupportable, stupendous woe!
What shall we do? ah! whither shall we go?
Down to the grave, down to those happy shades below,
Where all our brave progenitors are blest,
With endless triumph and eternal rest.

VI.

But who, without a flood of tears, can see
 Thy mournful sad catastrophe?
 Who can behold thy glorious temple lie 140
 In ashes, and not be in pain to die?
 Unhappy, dear Jerusalem! thy woes
 Have rais'd my griefs to such a vast excess,
 Their mighty weight no mortal knows,
 Thought cannot comprehend, or words express;
 Nor can they possibly, while I survive, be less. 146
 Good heaven had been extremely kind
 If it had struck me dead, or struck me blind,
 Before this cursed time, this worst of days.
 Is death quite tir'd? are all his arrows spent 150
 If not, why then so many dull delays?
 Quick, quick, let the obliging dart be sent!
 Nay, at me only let ten thousand fly,
 Whoe'er shall wretchedly survive, that I
 May, happily, be sure to die. 155
 Yet still we live, live in excess of pain;
 Our friends and relatives are slain;
 Nothing but ruins round us see,
 Nothing but desolation, woe, and misery!
 Nay, while we thus with bleeding hearts complain,
 Our enemies without prepare 161
 Their direful engines to pursue the war,
 And you may slavishly preserve your breath,
 Or seek for freedom in the arms of Death.

VII.

Thus then resolve, nor tremble at the thought; 165
 Can glory be too dearly bought?
 Since the Almighty wisdom has decreed
 That we and all our progeny should bleed,
 It shall be after such a noble way,
 Succeeding ages will with wonder view 170
 What brave despair compell'd us to:
 No, we will ne'er survive another day.
 Bring then your wives, your children, all
 That's valuable, good, or dear,

With ready hands, and place 'em nere
 They shall unite in one vast funeral.
 I know your courages are truly brave,
 And dare do any thing but ill :
 Who would an aged father save,
 That he may live in chains, and be a slave, 180
 Or for remorseless enemies to kill ?
 Let your bold hands then give the fatal blow ;
 For what at any other time would be
 The dire effect of rage and cruelty,
 Is mercy, tenderness, and pity, now. 185
 This, then, perform'd, we'll to the battle fly,
 And there, amidst our slaughter'd foes, expire.
 If 'tis revenge and glory you desire,
 Now you may have them if you dare but die ;
 Nay, more, e'en freedom and eternity. 190

REASON.

UNHAPPY man ! who, thro' successive years,
 From early youth to life's last childhood errs ;
 No sooner born but proves a foe to truth,
 For infant Reason is o'erpower'd in youth.
 The cheats of sense will half our learning share, 5
 And preconceptions all our knowledge are.
 Reason, 'tis true, should over sense preside,
 Correct our notions, and our judgments guide ;
 But false opinions, rooted in the mind,
 Hoodwink the soul, and keep our reason blind. 10
 Reason's a taper which but faintly burns ;
 A languid flame, that glows and dies by turns :
 We see't a little while, and but a little way,
 We travel by its light, as men by day ;
 But quickly dying, it forsakes us soon, 15
 Like morning-stars, that never stay till noon.
 The soul can scarce above the body rise,
 And all we see is with corporeal eyes.
 Life now does scarce one glimpse of light display :
 We mourn in darkness, and despair of day : 20
 That nat'ral light, once dress'd with orient beams,
 Is now diminish'd, and a twilight seems ;

A miscellaneous composition, made
 Of night and day, of sunshine and of shade.
 Through an uncertain medium now we look, 25
 And find that falshood which for truth we took :
 So rays projected from the eastern skies
 Shew the false day before the sun can rise.

That little knowledge now which man obtains
 From outward objects, and from sense he gains : 30
 He, like a wretched slave, must plod and sweat,
 By day must toil, by night that toil repeat ;
 And yet at last what little fruit he gains !
 A beggar's harvest, glean'd with mighty pains.

The passions, still predominant, will rule, 35
 Ungovern'd, rude, not bred in Reason's school ;
 Our understanding they with darkness fill,
 Cause strong corruptions, and pervert the will ,
 On these the soul, as on some flowing tide,
 Must sit, and on the raging billows ride, 40
 Hurry'd away, for how can be withstood
 Th' impetuous torrent of the boiling blood ?
 Begone, false hopes ! for all our learning's vain ;
 Can we be free where these the rule maintain ?
 These are the tools of knowledge which we use : 45
 The spirits heated will strange things produce.
 Tell me whoe'er the passions could control,
 Or from the body disengage the soul :
 Till this is done our best pursuits are vain,
 To conquer truth, and unmix'd knowledge gain.
 Through all the bulky volumes of the dead, 51
 And thro' those books that modern times have bred,
 With pain we travel, as through moorish ground,
 Where scarce one useful plant is ever found ;
 O'er-run with errors, which so thick appear, 55
 Our search proves vain, no spark of truth is there.

What's all the noisy jargon of the schools
 But idle nonsense of laborious fools,
 Who fetter reason with perplexing rules ?
 What in Aquinas' bulky works are found 90
 Does not enlighten reason, but confound.

Who travels Scotus' swelling tomes shall find
 A cloud of darkness rising in the mind.
 In controverted points can reason sway,
 When passion or conceit still hurries us away? 65
 Thus his new notions Sherlock would instil,
 And clear the greatest mysteries at will;
 But by unlucky wit perplex'd them more,
 And made them darker than they were before.
 South soon oppos'd him, out of Christian zeal, 70
 Shewing how well he could dispute and rail.
 How shall we e'er discover which is right,
 When both so eagerly maintain the fight?
 Each does the other's arguments deride;
 Each has the Church and Scripture on his side: 75
 The sharp ill-natur'd combat's but a jest:
 Both may be wrong; one, perhaps, errs the least.
 How shall we know which Articles are true,
 The Old ones of the church, or Burnet's New?
 In paths uncertain and unsafe he treads, 80
 Who blindly follows other's fertile heads.
 What sure, what certain mark have we to know
 The right or wrong 'twixt Burges's, Wake and Howe?
 Should untun'd nature claim the medic art,
 What health can that contentious tribe impart? 85
 Ev'ry physician writes a diff'rent bill,
 And gives no other reason but his will.
 No longer boast your art, ye impious race!
 Let wars 'twixt alkalis and acids cease,
 And proud G——ll with Colbatch be at peace. 90
 Gibbons and Radcliffe do but rarely guess;
 To-day they've good, to-morrow no success.
 E'en Garth and Maurus* sometimes shall prevail,
 When Gibson, learned Hannes, and Tyson, fail.
 And, more than once, we've seen that blund'ring S—ne,
 Missing the gout, by chance has hit the stone; 96
 The patient does the lucky error find;
 A cure he works, though not the cure design'd.
 Custom, the world's great idol, we adore,
 And knowing this, we seek to know no more. 100

What education did at first receive,
 Our ripen'd age confirms us to believe :
 The careful nurse and priest are all we need,
 To learn opinions and our country's creed ;
 The parents' precepts early are instill'd, 105
 And spoil the man whilst they instruct the child.
 To what hard fate is human-kind betray'd,
 When thus implicit faith's a virtue made,
 When education more than truth prevails,
 And nought is current but what custom seals ? 110
 Thus from the time we first began to know,
 We live and learn, but not the wiser grow.

We seldom use our liberty aright,
 Nor judge of things by universal light ;
 Our prepossessions and affections bind 115
 The soul in chains, and lord it o'er the mind ;
 And if self-interest be but in the case,
 Our unexamin'd principles may pass. [ceive,
 Good Heavens ! that man should thus himself de-
 To learn on credit, and on trust believe ! 120
 Better the mind no notions had retain'd,
 But still a fair unwritten blank remain'd :
 For now, who truth from falshood would discern,
 Must first disrobe the mind, and all unlearn.
 Errors contracted in unmindful youth, 125
 When once remov'd, will smoothe the way to truth.
 To dispossess the child the mortal lives,
 But death approaches ere the man arrives. [find,

Those who would learning's glorious kingdom
 The dear-bought purchase of the trading mind, 130
 From many dangers must themselves acquit,
 And more than Scilla and Charibdis meet.
 Oh ! what an ocean must be voyag'd o'er
 To gain a prospect of the shining shore ?
 Resisting rocks oppose th' inquiring soul, 135
 And adverse waves retard it as they roll.

Does not that foolish deference we pay
 To men that liv'd long since, our passage stay ?
 What odd prepost'rous paths at first we tread,
 And learn to walk by stumbling on the dead ? 140

First we a blessing from the grave implore,
 Worship old urns, and monuments adore;
 The rev'rend sage, with vast esteem, we prize;
 He liv'd long since, and must be wond'rous wise.

Thus are we debtors to the famous dead 145
 For all those errors which their fancy bred:
 Errors indeed! for real knowledge stay'd
 With those first times, nor farther was convey'd,
 While light opinions are much lower brought,
 For on the waves of ignorance they float; 150
 But solid truth scarce ever gains the shore,
 So soon it sinks, and ne'er emerges more.

Suppose those many dreadful dangers past,
 Will knowledge dawn, and bless the mind at last?
 Ah! no; 'tis now environ'd from our eyes, 155
 Hides all its charms, and undiscover'd lies.
 Truth, like a single point, escapes the sight,
 And claims attention to perceive it right:
 But what resembles truth is soon descry'd,
 Spread like a surface, and expanded wide. 160
 The first man rarely, very rarely, finds
 The tedious search of long inquiring minds:
 But yet, what's worse, we know not when we err;
 What mark does truth, what bright distinction, bear
 How do we know that what we know is true? 165
 How shall we falsehood fly, and truth pursue?
 Let none then here his certain knowledge boast,
 'Tis all but probability at most:
 This is the easy purchase of the mind,
 The vulgar's treasure, which we soon may find: 170
 But truth lies hid, and ere we can explore
 The glitt'ring gem, our fleeting life is o'er.



PINDARIC ESSAYS.

A PROSPECT OF DEATH.

-----Sed omnes una manet nox,
Et calcanda semel via lethi. HOR.

SINCE we can die but once, and after death
Our state no alteration knows,
But when we have resign'd our breath
Th' immortal spirit goes
To endless joys or everlasting woes, 5
Wise is the man who labours to secure
That mighty and important stake,
And by all methods strives to make
His passage safe, and his reception sure.
Merely to die no man of reason fears, 10
For certainly we must,
As we are born, return to dust ;
'Tis the last point of many ling'ring years :
But whither then we go,
Whither we fain would know ; 15
But human understanding cannot show :
This makes us tremble, and creates
Strange apprehensions in the mind,
Fills it with restless doubts and wild debates
Concerning what we living cannot find. 20
None know what death is but the dead,
Therefore we all, by nature, dying dread,
As a strange doubtful way we know not how to tread.

II.

When to the margin of the grave we come,
And scarce have one black painful hour to live, 25
No hopes, no prospect, of a kind reprieve,
To stop our speedy passage to the tomb,
How moving and how mournful is the sight !
How wondrous pitiful, how wondrous sad !
Where then is refuge, where is comfort to be had 30
In the dark minutes of the dreadful night
To cheer our drooping souls for their amazing flight ?
Feeble and languishing in bed we lie,

Despairing to recover, void of rest,
 Wishing for death, and yet afraid to die; 35
 Terrors and doubts distract our breast,
 With mighty agonies and mighty pains oppress.

III.

Our face is moistened with a clammy sweat,
 Faint and irregular the pulses beat;
 The blood inactive grows, 40
 And thickens as it flows,
 Depriv'd of all its vigour, all its vital heat:
 Our dying eyes roll heavily about,
 Their light just going out,
 And for some kind assistance call; 45
 But pity, useless pity's all
 Our weeping friends can give
 Or we receive;
 Though their desires are great, their pow'rs are small.
 The tongue's unable to declare 50
 The pains and griefs, the miseries, we bear,
 How insupportable our torments are.
 Music no more delights our deaf'ning ears,
 Restores our joys, or dissipates our fears,
 But all is melancholy, all is sad,
 In robes of deepest mourning clad;
 For ev'ry faculty and ev'ry sense 55
 Partakes the woe of this dire exigence.

IV.

Then we are sensible, too late,
 'Tis no advantage to be rich or great; 60
 For all the fulsome pride and pageantry of state
 No consolation brings;
 Riches and honours then are useless things,
 Tasteless or bitter all,
 And, like the book which the apostle ate, 65
 To the ill-judging palate sweet,
 But turn at last to nauseousness and gall.
 Nothing will then our drooping spirits cheer
 But the remembrance of good actions past;
 Virtue's a joy that will for ever last, 70

And makes pale Death less terrible appear,
 Takes out his baneful sting, and palliates our fear.
 In the dark antichamber of the grave
 What would we give (e'en all we have,
 All that our care and industry hath gain'd 75
 All that our policy, our fraud, our art, obtain'd)
 Could we recal those fatal hours again
 Which we consum'd in senseless vanities,
 Ambitious follies, or luxurious ease;
 For then they urge our terrors and increase our pain.

V.

Our friends and relatives stand weeping by, 85
 Dissolv'd in tears, to see us die,
 And plunge into the deep abyss of wide eternity.
 In vain they mourn, in vain they grieve,
 Their sorrows cannot ours relieve: 85
 They pity our deplorable estate;
 But what, alas! can pity do
 To soften the decrees of Fate?
 Besides, the sentence is irrevocable too.
 All their endeavours to preserve our breath, 90
 Though they do unsuccessful prove,
 Shew us how much, how tenderly they love,
 But cannot cut off the entail of death.
 Mournful they look, and crowd about our bed;
 One, with officious haste, 95
 Brings us a cordial we want sense to taste;
 Another softly raises up our head;
 This wipes away the sweat, that, sighing, cries,
 "See what convulsions, what strong agonies,
 "Both soul and body undergo! 100
 "His pains no intermission know,
 "For ev'ry gasp of air he draws returns in sighs."
 Each would his kind assistance lend
 To save his dear relation or his dearer friend,
 But still in vain with Destiny they all contend. 105

VI.

Our father, pale with grief and watching grown,
 Takes our cold hand in his, and cries, "Adieu!"

“ Adieu, my child ! now I must follow you ;”
Then weeps, and gently lays it down.

Our sons, who in their tender years 110

Were objects of our cares and of our fears,
Come trembling to our bed, and, kneeling, cry,

“ Bless us, O father ! now, before you die ;

“ Bless us, and be you bless’d to all eternity.”

Our friend, whom equal to ourselves we love, 115

Compassionate and kind,

Cries, “ Will you leave me here behind ?

“ Without me fly to the bless’d seats above ?

“ Without me, did I say ? Ah ! no ;

“ Without thy friend thou canst not go ; 120

“ For though thou leav’st me grov’ling here below,

“ My soul with thee shall upward fly

“ And bear thy spirit company

“ Through the bright passage of the yielding sky.

“ E’en death, that parts thee from thyself, shall be

“ Incapable to separate 126

“ (For ’tis not in the pow’r of Fate)

“ My friend, my best, my dearest friend and me ;

“ But, since it must be so, farewell,

“ For ever ! no ; for we shall meet again, 130

“ And live like gods, though now we die like men,

“ In the eternal regions where just spirits dwell.”

VII.

The soul, unable longer to maintain

The fruitless and unequal strife,

Finding her weak endeavours vain 135

To keep the counterscrap of life,

By slow degrees retires towards the heart.

And fortifies that little fort

With all the kind artilleries of art,

Botanic legions guarding ev’ry port ; 140

But Death, whose arms no mortal can repel,

A formal siege disdains to lay,

Summons his fierce battalions to the fray,

And in a minute forms the feeble citadel.

Sometimes we may capitulate, and he 145

Pretends to make a solid peace ;

But 'tis all sham, all artifice,
 That we may negligent and careless be ;
 For if his armies are withdrawn to-day,
 And we believe no danger near,
 But all is peaceable and all is clear,
 His troops return some unexpected way ;
 While in the soft embrace of Sleep we lie,
 The secret murd'ers stab us, and we die.

150

VIII.

Since our first parents' fall
 Inevitable death descends on all,
 A portion none of human race can miss ;
 But that which makes it sweet or bitter is
 The fears of misery, or certain hopes of bliss :
 For when th' impenitent and wicked die,
 Loaded with crimes and infamy :
 If any sense at that sad time remains,
 They feel amazing terrors, mighty pains,
 The earnest of that vast stupendous woe
 Which they to all eternity must undergo,
 Confin'd in hell with everlasting chains.
 Infernal spirits hover in the air,
 Like rav'nous wolves, to seize upon the prey,
 And hurry the departed souls away
 To the dark receptacles of despair,
 Where they must dwell till that tremendous day
 When the loud trump shall call them to appear
 Before a Judge most terrible and most severe,
 By whose just sentence they must go
 To everlasting pains and endless woe.

155

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165

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175

IX.

But the good man, whose soul is pure,
 Unspotted, regular, and free
 From all the ugly stains of lust and villany,
 Of mercy and of pardon sure,
 Looks thro' the darkness of the gloomy night,
 And sees the dawning of a glorious day ;
 Sees crowds of angels ready to convey
 His soul, whene'er she takes her flight,
 To the surprising mansions of immortal light:

180

Then the celestial guards around him stand,
 Nor suffer the black demons of the air
 To oppose his passage to the promis'd land,
 Or terrify his thoughts with wild despair,
 But all is calm within, and all without is fair.
 His prayers, his charity, his virtues, press
 To plead for mercy when he wants it most ;
 Not one of all the happy number's lost,
 And those bright advocates ne'er want success :
 But when the soul's releas'd from dull mortality,
 She passes up in triumph through the sky,
 Where she's united to a glorious throng
 Of angels, who, with a celestial song,
 Congratulate her conquest as she flies along.

190

195

X.

If, therefore, all must quit the stage,
 When, or how soon, we cannot know,
 But late or early we are sure to go,
 In the fresh bloom of youth or wither'd age,
 We cannot take too sedulous a care
 In this important grand affair,
 For as we die we must remain ;
 Hereafter all our hopes are vain,
 To make our peace with Heaven, or to return again.
 The Heathen, who no better understood
 Than what the light of Nature taught, declar'd
 No future misery could be prepar'd
 For the sincere, the merciful, the good ;
 But if there was a state of rest,
 They should with the same happiness be blest
 As the immortal gods, if gods there were, possess.
 We have the promise of eternal Truth,
 Those who live well, and pious paths pursue,
 To man and to their Maker true,
 Let 'em expire in age or youth,
 Can never miss
 Their way to everlasting bliss ;
 But from a world of misery and care
 To mansions of eternal ease repair,

200

205

210

215

220

Where joy in full perfection flows,
And in an endless circle move
Through the vast round of beatific love,
Which no cessation knows.

226

ON THE GENERAL CONFLAGRATION, AND ENSUING JUDGMENT.

A PINDARIC ESSAY.

*Esse quoque in fatis, reminiscitur, affore tempus
Quo mare, quo tellus, correptaque regia coeli
Ardeat, et mundi moles operosa laboret.*

OVID. MET.

NOW the black days of universal doom,
Which wondrous prophecies foretold, are come:
What strong convulsions, what stupendous woe,
Must sinking Nature undergo,
Amidst the dreadful wreck and final overthrow! 5
Methinks I hear her, conscious of her fate,
With fearful groans and hideous cries
Fill the presaging skies,
Unable to support the weight
Or of the present or approaching miseries. 10
Methinks I hear her summon all
Her guilty offspring, raving with despair,
And trembling, cry aloud, "Prepare,
"Ye sublunary Pow'rs! t'attend my funeral." 15

II.

See! see the tragical portents,
Those dismal harbingers of dire events,
Loud thunders roar, and darting lightnings fly
Through the dark concave of the troubled sky;
The fiery ravage is begun, the end is nigh.
See how the glaring meteors blaze! 20
Like baleful torches, O, they come,
To light dissolving Nature to her tomb!
And, scatt'ring round their pestilential rays,
Strike the affrighted nations with a wild amaze.
Vast sheets of flame and globes of fire, 25
By an impetuous wind, are driven
Through all the regions of th' inferior heaven,
Till hid in sulph'rous smoke they seemingly expire.

Sad and amazing 'tis to see
What mad confusion rages over all 30
This scorching ball!
No country is exempt, no nation free,
But each partakes the epidemic misery.
What dismal havoc of mankind is made
By wars, and pestilence, and dearth, 35
Through the whole mournful earth,
Which with a murd'ring fury they invade,
Forsook by Providence and all propitious aid!
Whilst fiends let loose, their utmost rage employ
To ruin all things here below; 40
Their malice and revenge no limits know,
But in the universal tumult all destroy.

IV.

Distracted mortals from their cities fly
For safety to their champaign ground;
But there no safety can be found; 45
The vengeance of an angry Deity,
With unrelenting fury, does inclose them round:
And whilst for mercy some aloud implore
The God they ridicul'd before;
And others, raving with their woe, 50
(For hunger, thirst, despair, they undergo)
Blaspheme and curse the pow'r they should adore:
The earth, parch'd up with drought, her jaws extends,
And op'ning wide a dreadful tomb,
The howling multitude at once descends 55
Together all into her burning womb.

V.

The trembling Alps abscond their aged heads
In mighty pillars of infernal smoke,
Which from their bellowing caverns broke,
And suffocates whole nations where it spreads. 60
Sometimes the fire within divides
The massy rivers of those secret chains
Which hold together their prodigious sides;
And hurls the shatter'd rocks o'er all the plains,

While towns and cities, ev'ry thing below,
Is overwhelm'd with the same burst of woe.

65

VI.

No show'rs descend from the malignant sky
To cool the burning of the thirsty field ;
The trees no leaves, no grafs the meadows, yield,
But all is barren, all is dry.

70

The little rivulets no more
To larger streams their tribute pay,
Nor to the ebbing ocean they,
Which, with a strange unusual roar, [before,
Forsakes those ancient bounds they would have pass'd
And to the monstrous deep in vain retires : 76
For e'en the deep itself is not secure,
But, belching subterraneous fires,
Increases still the scalding calenture,
Which neither earth, nor air, nor water, can endure.

VII.

The sun, by sympathy, concern'd
At those convulsions, pangs, and agonies,
Which on the whole creation seize,
Is to substantial darkness turn'd.

81

The neighb'ring moon, as if a purple flood
O'erflow'd her tott'ring orb, appears
Like a huge mass of black corrupting blood,
For she herself a dissolution fears.

85

The larger planets, which once shone so bright
With the reflected rays of borrow'd light,
Shook from their centre, without motion lie
Unwieldy globes of solid night,
And ruinous lumber of the sky.

90

VIII.

Amidst this dreadful hurricane of woes
(For fire, confusion, horror, and despair,
Fill ev'ry region of the tortur'd earth and air)
The great archangel his loud trumpet blows ;
At whose amazing sound fresh agonies
Upon expiring nature seize :

95

For now she'll in few minutes know
Th' ultimate event and fate of all below.

100

Awake, ye dead! awake! he cries;
 (For all must come)
 All that had human breath, arise,
 To hear your last unalterable doom!

105

IX.

At this the ghastly tyrant, who had sway'd
 So many thousand ages uncontroll'd,
 No longer could his sceptre hold,
 But gave up all, and was himself a captive made.
 The scatter'd particles of human clay,
 Which in the silent grave's dark chambers lay,
 Resume their pristine forms again.

110

And now from mortal grow immortal men.
 Stupendous energy of sacred pow'r!
 Which can collect wherever cast,
 The smallest atoms, and that shape restore
 Which they had worn so many years before,
 That thro' strange accidents and num'rous changes past.

115

X.

See how the joyful angels fly
 From ev'ry quarter of the sky,
 To gather, and to convoy all
 The pious sons of human race
 To one capacious place,
 Above the confines of this flaming ball.
 See with what tenderness and love they bear
 Those righteous souls thro' the tumultuous air,
 Whilst the ungodly stand below,
 Raging with shame, confusion and despair,
 Amidst the burning overthrow,
 Expecting fiercer torments and acuter woe.
 Round them infernal spirits howling fly;
 "O horror! curses! tortures! chains!" they cry,
 And roar aloud with execrable blasphemy.

120

125

130

XI.

Hark! how the daring sons of Infamy,
 Who once dissolv'd in pleasures lay,
 And laugh'd at this tremendous day,
 To rocks and mountains now to hide 'em cry;
 But rocks and mountains all in ashes lie.

135

Their shame's so mighty, and so strong their fear,
 That, rather than appear 140
 Before a God incens'd, they would be hurl'd
 Amongst the burning ruins of the world,
 And lie conceal'd, if possible, for ever there.
 Time was they would not own a Deity,
 Nor after death a future state; 145
 But now, by sad experience, find too late
 There is, and terrible to that degree,
 That rather than behold his face they cease to be.
 And sure 'tis better, if heaven would give consent,
 To have no being; but they must remain 150
 For ever, and for ever be in pain.
 O inexpressible, stupendous punishment,
 Which cannot be endur'd, yet must be underwent!

XII.

But now the eastern skies expanding wide,
 The glorious Judge Omnipotent descends, 154
 And to the sublunary world his passage bends,
 Where, cloath'd with human nature, he did once reside.
 Round him the bright etherial armies fly,
 And round triumphant hallelujahs sing,
 With songs of praise, and hymns of victory, 160
 To their celestial King;
 "All glory, pow'r, dominion, majesty,
 "Now, and for everlasting ages, be
 "To the essential One and co-eternal Three!
 "Perish that world, as 'tis decreed, 165
 "Which saw the God incarnate bleed!
 "Perish, by thy almighty vengeance, those
 "Who durst thy person or thy laws expose;
 "The cursed refuse of mankind, and hell's proud seed.
 "Now to the unbelieving nations show 170
 "Thou art a God from all eternity;
 "Not titular, or but by office so;
 "And let 'em the mysterious union see
 "Of human nature with the Deity."

XIII.

With mighty transports, yet with awful fears, 175
 The good behold this glorious sight;

Their God in all his majesty appears,
 Ineffable, amazing bright,
 And seated on a throne of everlasting light.
 Round the tribunal, next to the Most High, 180
 In sacred discipline and order, stand
 The peers and princes of the sky,
 As they excel in glory or command.
 Upon the right hand that illustrious crowd,
 In the white bosom of a shining cloud,
 Whose souls, abhorring all ignoble crimes,
 Did, with a steady course, pursue
 His holy precepts in the worst of times, [do.
 Maugre what earth or hell, what men or devils, could
 And now that God they did to death adore, 190
 For whom such torments and such pains they bore,
 Returns to place them on those thrones above,
 Where, undisturb'd, uncloy'd, they will possess
 Divine substantial happiness,
 Unbounded as his pow'r, and lasting as his love. 195

XIV.

"Go, bring," the Judge impartial, frowning, cries,
 "Those rebel sons who did my laws despise;
 "Whom neither threats nor promises could move,
 "Not all my sufferings, nor all my love,
 "To save themselves from everlasting miseries." 200
 At this ten millions of archangels flew
 Swifter than lightning, or the swiftest thought,
 And less than in an instant brought
 The wretched, curs'd infernal crew;
 Who with distorted aspects, come 205
 To hear their sad intolerable doom.
 "Alas!" they cry, "one beam of mercy show,
 "Thou all-forgiving Deity!"
 "To pardon crimes is natural to thee;
 "Crush us to nothing, or suspend our woe: 210
 "But if it cannot, cannot be,
 "And we must go into a gulf of fire,
 "(For who can with Omnipotence contend?)
 "Grant, for thou art a God, it may at last expire,
 "And all our tortures have an end. 215

" Eternal burnings, O! we cannot bear,
 " Tho' now our bodies too immortal are.
 " Let 'em be pungent to the last degree;
 " And let our pains innumerable be;
 " But let 'em not extend to all eternity!" 220

XV.

Lo! now there does no place remain
 For penitence and tears, but all
 Must by their actions stand or fall:
 To hope for pity is in vain;
 The die is cast, and not to be recall'd again. 225
 Two mighty books are by two angels brought;
 In this, impartially recorded, stands
 The law of Nature, and divine commands;
 In that, each action, word, and thought,
 Whate'er was said in secret, or in secret wrought. 230
 Then first the virtuous and the good,
 Who all the fury of temptation stood,
 And bravely pass'd thro' ignominy, chains, and blood,
 Attended by their guardian angels, come
 To the tremendous bar of final doom. 235
 In vain the grand Accuser, railing, brings
 A long indictment of enormous things,
 Whose guilt wip'd off by penitential tears,
 And their Redeemer's blood and agonies,
 No more, to their astonishment appears, 240
 But in the secret womb of dark Oblivion lies.

XVI.

" Come now, my friends!" he cries; " ye sons of Grace,
 " Partakers once of all my wrongs and shame,
 " Despis'd and hated for my name;
 " Come to your Saviour's and your God's embrace!
 " Ascend, and those bright diadems possess, 246
 " For you by my eternal Father made
 " Naked, and starv'd almost for want of bread,
 " You did your kindly visits pay,
 " Both clothed my body, and my hunger fed.
 " Weary'd with sickness, or oppress'd with grief,
 " Your hand was always ready to supply;

" Whene'er I wanted, you were always by
 " To share my sorrows, or to give relief.
 " In all distress so tender was your love,
 " I could no anxious trouble bear; 260
 " No black misfortune or vexatious care,
 " But you were still impatient to remove,
 " And mourn'd your charitable hand should unsuc-
 " All this you did, tho' not to me [cessful prove,
 " In person, yet to mine in misery; 265
 " And shall for ever live
 " In all the glories that a God can give,
 " Or a created being's able to receive."

XVII.

At this the architects divine on high
 Innumerable thrones of glory raise, 270
 On which they, in appointed order, place
 The human coheirs of eternity,
 And with united hymns the God incarnate praise:
 " O holy, holy, holy Lord,
 " Eternal God, almighty One, 275
 " Be thou for ever, and be thou alone,
 " By all thy creatures constantly ador'd!
 " Ineffable coequal Three,
 " Who from nonentity gave birth
 " To angels and to men, to heaven and to earth, 280
 " Yet always wast thyself, and wilt for ever be!
 " But for thy mercy we had ne'er possess'd
 " These thrones, and this immense felicity,
 " Could ne'er have been so infinitely blest:
 " Therefore all glory, pow'r, dominion, majesty,
 " To thee, O Lamb of God! to thee 286
 " For ever, longer than for ever, be!"

XVIII.

Then the incarnate Godhead turns his face
 To those upon the left, and cries,
 (Almighty vengeance flashing in his eyes) 290
 " Ye impious, unbelieving race!
 " To those eternal torments go,
 " Prepar'd for those rebellious sons of light,
 " In burning darkness and in flaming night,

" Which shall no limit or cessation know, 295
 " But always are extreme, and always will be so."
 The final sentence pass'd, a dreadful cloud
 Inclosing all the miserable crowd,
 A mighty hurricane of thunder rose,
 And hurl'd 'em all into a lake of fire, 300
 Which never, never, never, can expire,
 The vast abyss of endless woes ;
 Whilst with their God the righteous mount on high,
 In glorious triumph passing through the sky,
 To joys immense, and everlasting ecstasy. 305

DIES NOVISSIMA :
 OR, THE LAST EPIPHANY.

A PINDARIC ODE.

On Christ's second Appearance to judge the World.

A DIEU, ye toyish reeds ! that once could please
 My softer lips, and lull my cares to ease :
 Begone ; I'll waste no more vain hours with you ;
 And smiling Sylvia, too, adieu ;
 A brighter pow'r invokes my Muse, 5
 And loftier thoughts and raptures does infuse.
 See ! beck'ning from yon cloud he stands,
 And promises assistance with his hands.
 I feel the heavy rolling God,
 Incumbent, revel in his frail abode. 10
 How my breast heaves, and pulses beat !
 I sink, I sink, beneath the furious heat ;
 The weighty bliss o'erwhelms my breast,
 And overflowing joys profusely waste.
 Some nobler bard, O sacred Pow'r ! inspire, 15
 Or soul more large, th' elapses to receive ;
 And, brighter yet, to catch the fire,
 And each gay following charm from death to save !
 —In vain the suit—the God inflames my breast ;
 I rave, with ecstasies oppress'd ;
 I rise, the mountains lessen and retire ;
 And now I mix, unsing'd, with elemental fire ;

The leading deity I have in view,
Nor mortal knows as yet what wonders will ensue.

II.

We pass'd through regions of unfully'd light ; 25
I gaz'd and sicken'd at the blissful sight ;
A shudd'ring paleness seiz'd my look ;
At last the pest flew off, and thus I spoke ;
“ Say, sacred Guide ! shall this bright clime
“ Survive the fatal test of time, 30
“ Or perish with our mortal globe below,
“ When yonder sun no longer shines ?”
Straight I finish'd—veiling low :
The visionary Pow'r rejoins,
“ 'Tis not for you to ask, nor mine to say, 35
“ The niceties of that tremendous day.
“ Know, when o'erjaded Time his round has run,
“ And finish'd are the radiant journies of the sun,
“ The great decisive morn shall rise,
“ And heaven's bright Judge appear in op'ning skies ;
“ Eternal grace and justice he'll bestow
“ On all the trembling world below.

III.

He said ; I mus'd, and thus return'd :
“ What ensigns, courteous stranger ! tell,
“ Shall the brooding day reveal ?” 45
He answer'd mild——
“ Already, stupid with their crimes,
“ Blind mortals prostrate to their idols lie :
“ Such were the boding times,
“ Ere ruin blasted from the sluicy sky ; 50
“ Dissolv'd they lay in fulsome ease,
“ And revell'd in luxuriant peace ;
“ In Bacchanals they did their hours consume,
“ And Bacchanals led on their swift advancing doom.

IV.

“ Adult'rate christs already rise,
“ And dare t' assuage the angry skies ;
“ Erratic throngs their Saviour's blood deny,
“ And from the cross, alas ! he does neglected sigh ;

" The antichristian pow'r has rais'd his hydra head,
 " And ruin, only less than Jesus' health, does spread.
 " So long the gore thro' poison'd veins has flow'd, 61
 " That scarcely ranker is a Fury's blood ;
 " Yet specious artifice, and fair disguise
 " The monster's shape and curs'd design belies :
 " A fiend's black venom in an angel's mien 65
 " He quaffs, and scatters the contagious spleen ;
 " Straight, when he finishes his lawless reign,
 " Nature shall paint the shining scene,
 " Quick as the lightning which inspires the train.

V.

" Forward confusion shall provoke the fray, 70
 " And Nature from her ancient order stray :
 " Black tempests, gath'ring from the seas around,
 " In horrid ranges shall advance ;
 " And as they march, in thickest fables drown'd,
 " The rival thunder from the clouds shall sound, 75
 " And lightnings join the fearful dance :
 " The blust'ring armies o'er the skies shall spread,
 " And universal terror shed ;
 " Loud issuing peals and rising sheets of smoke
 " Th' encumber'd region of the air shall choke ; 80
 " The noisy main shall lash the suff'ring shore,
 " And from the rocks the breaking billows roar ;
 " Black thunder bursts, blue lightning burns,
 " And melting worlds to heaps of ashes turns ;
 " The forest shall beneath the tempest bend, 85
 " And rugged wings the nodding cedars rend.

VI.

" Reverse all Nature's web shall run,
 " And spotless misrule all around
 " Order, its flying foe, confound,
 " Whilst backward all the threads shall haste to be un-
 " Triumphant Chaos, with his oblique wand [spun.
 " (The wand with which, ere time begun,
 " His wand'ring slaves he did command,
 " And made 'em scamper right, and in rude ranges
 " The hostile harmony shall chase, [run)
 " And as the nymph resigns her place, 96

“ And panting to the neighbouring refuge flies,
 “ The formless ruffian slaughters with his eyes,
 “ And following, storms the perching dame’s retreat,
 “ Adding the terror of his threat ; 100
 “ The globe shall faintly tremble round,
 “ And backward jolt, distorted with the wound.

VII.

“ Swath’d in substantial shrouds of night,
 “ The sick’ning sun shall from the world retire,
 “ Stripp’d of his dazzling robes of fire, [light ;
 “ Which, dangling, once shed round a lavish flood of
 “ No frail eclipse, but all essential shade,
 “ Not yielding to primeval gloom,
 “ Whilst day was yet an embryo in the womb ; 109
 “ Nor glimmering in its source with silver streamers
 “ A jetty mixture of the darkness spread [play’d,
 “ O’er murm’ring Egypt’s head ;
 “ And that which angels drew
 “ O’er Nature’s face when Jesus dy’d,
 “ Which sleeping ghosts for this mistook, 115
 “ And, rising, off their hanging fun’rals shook,
 “ And fleeting pass’d expos’d their bloodless breasts
 to view,
 “ Yet find it not so dark, and to their dormitories glide.

VIII.

“ Now bolder fires appear,
 “ And o’er the palpable obscurement sport, 120
 “ Glaring and gay as falling Lucifer, [court,
 “ Yet mark’d with fate, as when he fled th’ etherial
 “ And plung’d into the op’ning gulph of night :
 “ A sabre of immortal flame I bore, 124
 “ And with this arm his flour’ishing plume I tore,
 “ And straight the fiend retreated from the fight.

IX.

“ Mean time the lambent prodigies on high
 “ Take game some measures in the sky ;
 “ Joy’d with his future feasts, the thunder roars
 “ In chorus to the enormous harmony,
 “ And halloos to his offspring from sulphureous stores.

“ Applauding how they tilt and how they fly,
 “ And their each nimble turn and radiant embassy.

X.

“ The moon turns paler at the fight,
 “ And all the blazing orbs deny their light ; 135
 “ The lightning with its livid tail,
 “ A train of glitt’ring terrors draws behind,
 “ Which o’er the trembling world prevail ;
 “ Wing’d and blown on by storms of wind,
 “ They shew the hideous leaps on either hand 140
 “ Of Night, that spreads her ebon curtains round,
 “ And there erects her royal stand,
 “ In sev’n-fold winding jet her conscious temples
 [bound. XI.

“ The stars next, starting from their spheres,
 “ In giddy revolutions leap and bound ; 145
 “ Whilst this with double fury glares,
 “ And meditates new wars,
 “ And wheels in sportive gyres around,
 “ Its neighbour shall advance to fight,
 “ And while each offers to enlarge his right, 150
 “ The general ruin shall increase,
 “ And banish all the votaries of peace.
 “ No more the stars, with paler beams,
 “ Shall tremble o’er the midnight streams,
 “ But travel downward to behold 155
 “ What mimics ’em so twinkling there,
 “ And, like Narcissus, as they gain more near,
 “ For the lov’d image straight expire,
 “ And agonize in warm desire,
 “ Or flake their lust as in the stream they roll. 160

XII.

“ Whilst the world burns, and all the orbs below
 “ In their viperous ruins glow,
 “ They sink - and, unsupported, leave the skies,
 “ Which fall abrupt, and tell their torment in the noise :
 “ Then see th’ almighty Judge, sedate and bright, 165
 “ Cloth’d in imperial robes of light !
 “ His wings the wind, rough storms the chariot bear,
 “ And nimbler harbingers before him fly,

“ And with officious rudeness brush the air,
 “ Halt as he halts, then doubling in their flight, 170
 “ In horrid sport with one another vie,
 “ And leave behind quick-winding tracks of light;
 “ Then urging, to their ranks they close, [pose.
 “ And shiv’ring, lest they start, a sailing caravan com-

XIII.

“ The mighty Judge rides in tempestuous state, 175
 “ Whilst mighty guards his orders wait :
 “ His waving vestments shine
 “ Bright as the sun, which lately did its beams resign,
 “ And burnish’d wreaths of light shall make his form
 divine.

“ Strong beams of majesty around his temples play,
 “ And the transcendent gaiety of his face allay : 181
 “ His Father’s rev’rend characters he’ll wear,
 “ And both o’erwhelm with light and overawe with fear,
 “ Myriads of angels shall be there,
 “ And I, perhaps, close the tremendous rear : 185
 “ Angels, the first and fairest sons of day,
 “ Clad with eternal youth, and as their vestments gay.

XIV.

“ Nor for magnificence alone,
 “ To brighten and enlarge the pageant scene,
 “ Shall we encircle his more dazzling throne, 190
 “ And swell the lustre of his pompous train :
 “ The nimble ministers of bliss or woe
 “ We shall attend, and save, or deal the blow,
 “ As he admits to joy, or bids to pain.

XV.

“ The welcome news 195
 “ Thro’ ev’ry angel’s breast fresh raptures shall diffuse.
 “ The day is come [doom :
 “ When Satan, with his pow’rs, shall sink to endless
 “ No more shall we his hostile troops pursue
 “ From cloud to cloud, nor the long fight renew. 200
 “ Then Raphael, big with life, the trump shall sound
 “ From falling spheres the joyful music shall rebound;
 “ And seas and shores shall catch and propagate it round :

" Louder he'll blow, and it shall speak more shrill,
 " Than when from Sinai's hill, 205
 " In thunder, thro' the horrid redd'ning smoke
 " Th' Almighty spoke.
 " We'll shout around with martial joy,
 " And thrice the vaulted skies shall rend, and thrice our
 " Then first th' archangel's voice aloud [shouts reply.
 " Shall cheerfully salute the day and throng,
 " And hallelujahs fill the crowd,
 " And I, perhaps, shall close the song.

XVII.

" From its long sleep all human race shall rise, 214
 " And see the morn and Judge advancing in the skies;
 " To their old tenements the souls return, [descends.
 " Whilst down the steep of heaven as swift the Judge
 " These look illustrious bright, no more to mourn;
 " Whilst, see! distracted looks yon stalking shades
 attend.
 " The saints no more shall conflict on the deep, 220
 " Nor rugged waves insult the lab'ring ship,
 " But from the wreck in triumph they arise,
 " And, borne to bliss, shall tread empyreal skies." 223

UPON THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES.

A PINDARIC ESSAY.

"Εἰς ἑσιν Θεός

"Ὅς ἔργον τεύχε καὶ γαῖαν μακρὰν. SOPHOC.

I. UNITY. ETERNITY.

WHENCE sprung this glorious frame? or when
 began

Things to exist? they could not always be:

To what stupendous energy

Shall we ascribe the origin of man;

That cause from whence all beings else arose 5

Must self-existent be alone,

Entirely perfect, and but one;

Nor equal nor superior knows:

Two Firsts, in reason, we can ne'er suppose:

If that, in false opinion, we allow
 That once there absolutely nothing was,
 Then nothing could be now;
 For by what instrument, or how,
 Shall nonexistence to existence pass?
 Thus something must from everlasting be
 Or matter, or a deity. 15

If matter only uncreate we grant,
 We shall volition, wit, and reason, want,
 An agent infinite, and action free.
 Whence does volition, whence does reason, flow? 20
 How came we to reflect, design, and know?
 This from a nobler nature springs,
 Distinct in essence from material things,
 For thoughtless matter cannot thought bestow:
 But if we own a God supreme, 25
 And all perfections possible in him,
 In him does boundless excellence reside,
 Pow'r to create, and Providence to guide;
 Unmade himself, could no beginning have,
 But to all substance prime existence gave? 30
 Can what he will destroy, and what he pleases save.

II. POWER.

The undesigning hand of giddy Chance
 Could never fill with globes of light,
 So beautiful and so amazing bright,
 The lofty concave of the vast expanse: 35
 These could proceed from no less pow'r than infinite.
 There's not one atom of this wond'rous frame,
 Nor essence intellectual, but took
 Existence when the great Creator spoke,
 And from the common womb of empty nothing came.
 "Let substance be," he cry'd, and straight arose 41
 Angelic and corporeal too;
 All that material nature shows.
 And what does things invisible compose,
 At the same instant sprung and into being flew.
 Mount to the convex of the highest sphere,
 Which draws a mighty circle round,
 The interior orbs, as their capacious bound,

There millions of new miracles appear ;
 There dwell the eldest sons of Pow'r immense, 50
 Who first were to perfection wrought,
 First to complete existence brought,
 To whom their Maker did dispense
 The largest portions of created excellence :
 Eternal now, not of necessity, 55
 As if they could not cease to be,
 Or were from possible destruction free,
 But on the will of God depend ;
 For that which could begin can end :
 Who when the lower worlds were made, 60
 Without the least miscarriage or defect,
 By the almighty Architect,
 United adoration paid,
 And with ecstatic gratitude his laws obey'd.

III.

Philosophy of old in vain essay'd 65
 To tell us how this mighty frame
 Into such beauteous order came,
 But by false reas'nings false foundations laid :
 She labour'd hard, but still the more she wrought
 The more was wilder'd in the maze of thought. 70
 Sometimes she fancied things to be
 Coëval with the Deity,
 And in the form which now they are
 From everlasting ages were.
 Sometimes the casual event 75
 Of atoms flowing in the space immense,
 Void of all wisdom, rule, and sense,
 But, by a lucky accident
 Jumbled into this scheme of wond'rous excellence.
 'Twas an establish'd article of old, 80
 Chief of the philosophic creed,
 And does in natural productions hold,
 That from mere nothing nothing could proceed.
 Material substance never could have rose
 If some existence had not been before, 85
 In wisdom infinite, immense in pow'r.
 Whate'er is made a Maker must suppose,

As an effect a cause that could produce it shows.
 Nature and art, indeed, have bounds assign'd,
 And only forms to things, not being, give ; 90
 That from Omnipotence they must receive :
 But the eternal self-existent Mind
 Can, with a single *fiat*, cause to be
 All that the wondrous eye surveys,
 And all it cannot see. 95
 Nature may shape a beauteous tree,
 And art a noble palace raise,
 But must not to creative pow'r aspire ;
 That their God alone can claim,
 As pre-existing substance doth require ; 100
 So where they nothing find can nothing frame.

IV. WISDOM.

Matter produc'd had still a chaos been,
 For jarring elements engaged
 Eternal battles would have waged,
 And fill'd with endless horror the tumultuous scene,
 If Wisdom infinite, for less 106
 Could not the vast prodigious embryo wield,
 Or strength complete to lab'ring nature yield,
 Had not, with actual address,
 Compos'd the bellowing hurry, and establish'd peace.
 Whate'er this visible creation shows 111
 That's lovely, uniform, and bright,
 That gilds the morning or adorns the night,
 To her its eminence and beauty owes.
 By her all creatures have their ends assign'd, 115
 Proportion'd to their nature and their kind,
 To which they steadily advance,
 Mov'd by right Reason's high command,
 Or guided by the secret hand
 Of real instinct or imaginary chance. 120
 Nothing but men reject her sacred rules,
 Who from the end of their creation fly,
 And deviate into misery ;
 As if the liberty to act like fools
 Were the chief cause that heaven made 'em free. 125

V. PROVIDENCE.

Bold is the wretch and blasphemous the man,
 Who, finite, will attempt to scan
 The works of Him that's infinitely wise,
 And those he cannot comprehend denies ;
 As if a space immense were measurable by a span. 130
 Thus the proud sceptic will not own
 That Providence the world directs,
 Or its affairs inspects,
 But leaves it to itself alone.

How does it with almighty grandeur suit, 135
 To be concern'd with our impertinence,
 Or interpose his pow'r for the defence
 Of a poor mortal or a senseless brute ?
 Villains could never so successful prove,
 And unmolested in their pleasures live, 140
 With honour, ease, and affluence, give,
 While such as heaven adore, and virtue love,
 And most the care of Providence deserve,
 Oppress'd with pain and ignominy starve.

What reason can the wisest show 145
 Why murder does unpunish'd go,
 If the Most High, that's just and good,
 Intends and governs all below,
 And yet regards not the loud cries of guiltless blood ?
 But shall we things unsearchable deny. 150

Because our reason cannot tell us why
 They are allowed or acted by the Deity ?
 'Tis equally above the reach of thought
 To comprehend how matter should be brought
 From nothing, as existent be 155
 From all eternity,

And yet that matter is, we feel and see ;
 Nor is it easier to define
 What ligatures the soul and body join,
 Or how the mem'ry does th' impression take 160
 Of things, and to the mind restores 'em back.

VI.

Did not the Almighty, with immediate care,
 Direct and govern this capacious all,

How soon would things into confusion fall!
Earthquakes the trembling ground would tear, 165
And blazing comets rule the troubled air;
Wide inundations, with resistless force,
The lower provinces o'erflow,
In spite of all that human strength could do,
To stop the raging sea's impetuous course: 170
Murder and rapine ev'ry place would fill,
And sinking Virtue stoop to prosp'rous ill;
Devouring pestilence rave,
And all that part of nature which has breath
Deliver to the tyranny of death, 175
And hurry to the dungeons of the grave,
If watchful Providence were not concern'd to save.
Let the brave soldier speak, who oft has been
In dreadful sieges, and fierce battles seen,
How he's preserv'd, when bombs and bullets fly 180
So thick that scarce one inch of air is free:
And tho' he does ten thousand see
Fall at his feet, and in a moment die,
Unhurt retreats, or gains unhurt the victory.
Let the poor shipwreck'd sailor show 185
To what invisible protecting pow'r
He did his life and safety owe
When the loud storm his well-built vessel tore,
And half a shatter'd plank convey'd him to the shore.
Nay, let th' ungrateful sceptic tell us how 190
His tender infancy protection found,
And helpless childhood was with safety crown'd,
If he'll no Providence allow;
When he had nothing but his nurse's arms
To guard him from innumerable fatal harms; 195
From childhood how to youth he ran
Securely, and from thence to man;
How, in the strength and vigour of his years,
The feeble bark of life he saves,
Amidst the fury of tempestuous waves, 200
From all the dangers he foresees or fears,
Yet ev'ry hour 'twixt Scylla and Charybdis steers,

If Providence, which can the seas command,
Held not the rudder with a steady hand?

VII. OMNIPRESENCE.

'Tis happy for the sons of men that He 205
Who all existence out of nothing made
Supports his creatures by immediate aid;
But then this all-intending Deity
Must omnipresent be:

For how shall we, by demonstration, show 210
The Godhead is this moment here,
If he's not present ev'ry where,
And always so?

What's not perceptible by sense may be
Ten thousand miles remote from me, 215
Unless his nature is from limitation free.

In vain we for protection pray,
For benefits received high altars raise,
And offer up our hymns and praise,
In vain his anger, dread, or laws obey; 220

An absent God from ruin can defend
No more than can an absent friend;
No more is capable to know
How gratefully we make returns,
When the loud music sounds or victim burns, 225
Than a poor Indian slave of Mexico.

If so, 'tis equally in vain
The prosp'rous sings and wretched mourns;
He cannot hear the praise or mitigate the pain.
But by what being is confin'd 230
The Godhead we adore?

He must have equal or superior pow'r:
If equal only they each other bind;
So neither's God, if we define him right,
For neither's infinite: 235

But if the other have superior might,
Then he we worship can't pretend to be
Omnipotent, and free

From all restraint, and so no Deity.
If God is limited in space, his view, 24
His knowledge, pow'r, and wisdom, is so too;

Unless we'll own that these perfections are
 At all times present ev'ry where,
 Yet he himself not actually there;
 Which to suppose, that strange conclusion brings, 245
 His essence and his attributes are diff'rent things.

VIII. IMMUTABILITY.

As the supreme omniscient Mind
 Is by no boundaries confin'd,
 So reason must acknowledge him to be
 From possible mutation free; 250
 For what he is he was from all eternity.
 Change, whether the effect of force or will,
 Must argue imperfection still;
 But imperfection in a deity,
 That's absolutely perfect, cannot be. 55
 Who can compel, without his own consent,
 A God to change, that is omnipotent?
 And ev'ry alteration, without force,
 Is for the better or the worse.
 He that is infinitely wise, 260
 To alter for the worse will never chuse;
 That a depravity of nature shews:
 And he, in whom all true perfection lies,
 Cannot, by change, to greater excellencies rise.
 If God be mutable, which way, or how, 265
 Shall we demonstrate that will please him now
 Which did a thousand years ago?
 And 'tis impossible to know
 What he forbids, or what he will allow.
 Murder, enchantment, lust, and perjury, 270
 Did in the foremost rank of vices stand,
 Prohibited by an exprefs command;
 But whether such they still remain to be
 No argument will positively prove,
 Without immediate notice from above, 275
 If the almighty Legislator can
 Be chang'd, like his inconstant subject man.
 Uncertain thus what to perform or shun,
 We all intolerable hazards run,
 When an eternal stake is to be lost or won. 280

IX. JUSTICE.

Rejoice, ye sons of Piety! and sing
 Loud hallelujahs to his glorious name,
 Who was, and will for ever be, the same :
 Your grateful incense to his temples bring,
 That from the smoking altars may arise 285
 Clouds of perfumes to the imperial skies.
 His promises stand firm to you,
 And endless joy will be bestow'd,
 As sure as that there is a God,
 On all who virtue choose, and righteous paths pursue.
 Nor should we more his menaces distrust, 291
 For while he is a deity he must
 (As infinitely good) be infinitely just.
 But does it with a gracious Godhead suit,
 Whose mercy is his darling attribute, 295
 To punish crimes that temporary be,
 And those but trivial offences too,
 Mere slips of human nature, small and few,
 With everlasting misery ?
 This shocks the mind, with deep reflections fraught. 300
 And reason bends beneath the pond'rous thought.
 Crimes take their estimate from guilt, and grow
 More heinous still, the more they do incense
 That God to whom all creatures owe
 Profoundest reverence ; 305
 Tho', as to that degree they raise
 The anger of the merciful most High,
 We have no standard to discern it by
 But the infliction he on the offender lays :
 So that, if endless punishment on all 311
 Our unrepented sins must fall,
 None, not the least, can be accounted small.
 That God is in perfection just, must be
 Allow'd by all that own a deity :
 If so, from equity he cannot swerve, 315
 Nor punish sinners more than they deserve.
 His will reveal'd is both express and clear :
 " Ye curst of my Father ! go
 " To everlasting woe."

If everlasting means eternal here,
 Duration absolutely without end,
 Against which sense some zealously contend,
 That, when apply'd to pains, it only means
 They shall ten thousand ages last,
 Ten thousand more, perhaps, when they are past,
 But not eternal, in a lit'ral sense: 326
 Yet own the pleasures of the just remain
 So long as there's a God exists to reign:
 Tho' none can give a solid reason why
 The word eternity, 330
 To heav'n and hell indifferently join'd,
 Should carry sense of a different kind;
 And 'tis a sad experiment to try.

X. GOODNESS.

But if there be one attribute divine
 With greater lustre than the rest can shine 335
 'Tis goodness, which we ev'ry moment see
 The Godhead exercise with such delight,
 It seems, it only seems, to be
 The best-belov'd perfection of the Deity,
 And more than infinite: 340
 Without that he could never prove
 The proper object of our praise or love.
 Were he not good, he'd be no more concern'd
 To hear the wretched in affliction cry,
 Or see the guiltless for the guilty die, 345
 Than Nero, when the flaming city burn'd,
 And weeping Romans o'er its ruins mourn'd.
 Eternal justice then would be
 But everlasting cruelty;
 Pow'r unrestrain'd, almighty violence, 350
 And wisdom unconfined but craft immense.
 'Tis goodness constitutes Him that he is,
 And those
 Who will deny him this
 A God without a Deity suppose. 355
 When the lewd Atheist blasphemously swears,
 By his tremendous name,
 There is no God, but all's a sham,

Insipid tattle, praise and pray'rs,
 Virtue, pretence; and all the sacred rules 360
 Religion teaches, tricks to cully fools;
 Justice would strike th'audacious villain dead,
 But mercy boundless saves his guilty head;
 Gives him protection, and allows him bread.
 Does not the sinner, whom no danger awes, 365
 Without restraint his infamy pursue,
 Rejoice and glory in it too,
 Laugh at the pow'r divine, and ridicule his laws,
 Labour in vice his rivals to excel,
 That when he's dead they may his pupils tell 370
 How wittily the fool was damn'd, how hard he fell?
 Yet this vile wretch in safety lives,
 Blessings in common with the best receives,
 Tho' he is proud t'affront the God those blessings gives.
 The cheerful sun his influence sheds on all, 375
 Has no respect to good or ill;
 And fruitful show'rs without distinction fall,
 Which fields with corn, with grass the pastures, fill.
 The bounteous hand of Heav'n bestows
 Success and honour many times on those 380
 Who scorn his fav'rites and caress his foes.

XI.

To this good God, whom my advent'rous pen
 Has dared to celebrate
 In lofty Pindar's strain,
 Tho' with unequall'd strength to bear the weight 385
 Of such a pond'rous theme, so infinitely great;
 To this good God celestial spirits pay,
 With ecstacy divine, incessant praise,
 While on the glories of his face they gaze,
 In the bright regions of eternal day: 390
 To him each rational existence here,
 Whose breast one spark of gratitude contains,
 In whom there are the least remains
 Of piety or fear,
 His tribute brings of joyful sacrifice, 395
 For pardon prays, and for protection flies:
 Nay, the inanimate creation give,

By prompt obedience to his word,
 Instinctive honour to their Lord,
 And shame the thinking world who in rebellion live. 400
 With heaven and earth, then, O my soul! unite,
 And the great God of both adore and bless,
 Who gives thee competence, content, and peace,
 The only fountains of sincere delight;
 That from the transitory joys below 405
 Thou, by a happy exit, mayst remove
 To those ineffable above,
 Which from the vision of the Godhead flow,
 And neither end, decrease, nor interruption know.

EPISTLES.

CRUELTY AND LUST.

AN EPISTOLARY ESSAY *.

WHERE can the wretched'st of all creatures fly,
 To tell the story of her misery?
 Where, but to faithful Celia, in whose mind
 A manly brav'ry's with soft pity join'd?
 I fear these lines will scarce be understood, 5
 Blurr'd with incessant tears, and writ in blood:
 But if you can the mournful pages read,
 The sad relation shews you such a deed
 As all the annals of th' infernal reign
 Shall strive to equal or exceed in vain. 10

Neronior's fame, no doubt, has reached your ears,
 Whose cruelty has caus'd a sea of tears,
 Fill'd each lamenting town with fun'ral sighs,
 Deploring widows' shrieks and orphans' cries.
 At ev'ry health the horrid monster quaff'd 15
 Ten wretches dy'd, and as they dy'd, he laugh'd,
 Till tir'd with acting devil, he was led,
 Drunk with excess of blood and wine, to bed.
 Oh! cursed place!—I can no more command
 My pen; shame and confusion shake my hand: 20

* This piece was occasion'd by the barbarity of Kirke, a commander in the Western rebellion, 1685, who debauched a young lady, with a promise to save her husband's life, but hanged him the next morning.

But I must on, and let my Celia know
How barb'rous are my wrongs, how vast my woe !

Amongst the crowd of Western youths, who ran
To meet the brave betray'd unhappy man*,

My husband, fatally uniting, went,
Unus'd to arms, and thoughtless of th' event :

25

But when the battle was by treach'ry won,
The chief and all but his false friend undone,

Tho' in the tumult of that desp'rate night

He 'scap'd the dreadful slaughter of the fight,
Yet the sagacious blood-hounds, skill'd too well

30

In all the murd'ring qualities of hell,

Each secret place so regularly beat,

They soon discover'd his unsafe retreat.

As hungry wolves triumphing o'er their prey,

35

To sure destruction hurry them away ;

So the purveyors of fierce Moloc's son

With Charion to the common butch'ry run,

Where proud Neronior by his gibbet stood,

To glut himself with fresh supplies of blood.

40

Our friends, by pow'rful intercession, gain'd,

A short reprieve, but for three days obtain'd,

To try all ways might to compassion move

The savage gen'ral ; but in vain they strove.

When I perceiv'd that all addresses fail'd,

45

And nothing o'er his stubborn soul prevail'd,

Distracted almost, to his tent I flew,

To make the last effort what tears could do.

Low on my knees I fell, then thus began :

“ Great genius of success ! thou more than man ! 50

“ Whose arms to ev'ry clime have terror hurl'd,

“ And carry'd conquest round the trembling world ;

“ Still may the brightest glories Fame can lend,

“ Your sword, your conduct, and your cause attend.

“ Here now the arbiter of Fate you sit,

55

“ While suppliant slaves their rebel heads submit.

“ Oh ! pity the unfortunate, and give

“ But this one thing ; oh ! let but Charion live !

“ And take the little all that we possess ;

* The Duke of Monmouth.

" I'll bear the meagre anguish of distress ;
 " Content, nay, pleas'd, to beg or earn my bread
 " Let Charion live, no matter how I'm fed :
 " The fall of such a youth no lustre brings
 " To him whose sword performs such wondrous things,
 " As saving kingdoms and supporting kings. 65
 " That triumph only with true grandeur shines
 " Where godlike courage godlike pity joins.
 " Cæsar, the eldest favourite of War,
 " Took not more pleasure to subdue than spare ;
 " And since in battle you can greater be, 70
 " That over, be'n't less merciful than he.
 " Ignoble spirits by revenge are known,
 " And cruel actions spoil the conqu'ror's crown,
 " In future hist'ries fill each mournful page
 " With tales of blood and monuments of rage ; 75
 " And while his annals are with horror read,
 " Men curse him living, and detest him dead.
 " Oh ! do not sully, with a sanguine dye,
 " (The foulest stain) so fair a memory !
 " Then as you'll live the glory of our isle, 80
 " And Fate on all your expeditions smile ;
 " So, when a noble course you've bravely ran,
 " Die the best soldier and the happiest man,
 " None can the turns of Providence foresee,
 " Or what their own catastrophe may be ; 85
 " Therefore, to persons lab'ring under woe,
 " That mercy they may want should always show :
 " For in the chance of war the slightest thing
 " May lose the battle or the vict'ry bring :
 " And how would you that general's honour prize, 90
 " Should in cool blood his captive sacrifice ?
 " He that with rebel arms to fight is led,
 " To justice forfeits his opprobrious head,
 " But 'tis unhappy Charions's first offence,
 " Seduc'd by some too plausible pretence, 95
 " To take the inj'ring side by error brought ;
 " He had no malice, tho' he has the fault.
 " Let the old tempters find a shameful grave,
 " But the half-innocent, the tempted, save.

" Vengeance divine, tho' for the greatest crime, 100
 " But rarely strikes the first or second time ;
 " And he best follows the Almighty's will
 " Who spares the guilty he has pow'r to kill.
 " When proud rebellions would unhinge a state,
 " And wild disorders in a land create, 105
 " 'Tis requisite the first promoters should
 " Put out the flames they kindled with their blood ;
 " But sure 'tis a degree of murder all
 " That draw their swords should undistinguish'd fall ;
 " And since a mercy must to some be shown, 110
 " Let Charion 'mongst the happy few be one ;
 " For as none guilty has less guilt than he,
 " So none for pardon has a fairer plea.

" When David's general had won the field,
 " And Absalom, the lov'd ungrateful, kill'd, 115
 " The trumpets sounding made all slaughter cease,
 " And misl'd Israelites return'd in peace.
 " The action past, where so much blood was spilt,
 " We hear of none arraign'd for that day's guilt,
 " But all concludes with the desir'd event, 120
 " The monarch pardons, and the Jews repent.
 " As great example your high courage warms,
 " And to illustrious deeds excites your arms,
 " So when you instances of mercy view,
 " They should inspire you with compassion too ; 125
 " For he that emulates the truly brave
 " Would always conquer, and should always save."

Here, interrupting, stern Neronior cry'd,
 (Swell'd with success, and blubber'd up with pride)
 " Madam, his life depends upon my will, 130
 " For ev'ry rebel I can spare or kill.
 " I'll think of what you've said : this night return
 " At ten : perhaps you'll have no cause to mourn.
 " Go, see your husband ; bid him not despair ;
 " His crime is great ; but you are wondrous fair." 135

When anxious miseries the soul amaze,
 And dire confusion in the spirits raise,
 Upon the least appearance of relief
 Our hopes revive, and mitigate our grief ;

Impatience makes our wishes earnest grow,
 Which thro' false optics our deliv'rance show ;
 For while we fancy danger does appear
 Most at a distance, it is oft too near ;
 And many times, secure from obvious foes,
 We fall into an ambushade of woes. 140

Pleas'd with the false Neronior's dark reply,
 I thought the end of all my sorrows nigh,
 And to the main-guard hasten'd, where the prey
 Of this blood-thirsty fiend in durance lay.

When Charion saw me, from his turfy bed
 With eagerness he rais'd his drooping head : 150

" Oh ! fly, my dear ! this guilty place," he cry'd
 " And in some distant clime thy virtue hide :
 " Here nothing but the foulest demons dwell,
 " The refuse of the damn'd, and mob of hell : 155

" The air they breathe is ev'ry atom curst :
 " There's no degree of ills, for all are worst :

" In rapes and murders they alone delight,
 " And villanies of less importance slight ;

" Act 'em indeed, but scorn they should be nam'd, 160
 " For all their glory's to be more than damn'd.

" Neronior's chief of this infernal crew,
 " And seems to merit that high station too ;

" Nothing but rage and lust inspire his breast,
 " By Asmodai and Moloc both possess'd. 165

" When told you went to intercede for me,
 " It threw my soul into an agony :

" Not that I would not for my freedom give
 " What's requisite, or do not wish to live ;

" But for my safety I can ne'er be base, 170
 " Or buy a few short years with long disgrace ;

" Nor would I have your yet unspotted fame
 " For me expos'd to an eternal shame.

" With ignominy to preserve my breath
 " Is worse, by infinite degrees, than death. 175

" But if I can't my life with honour save,
 " With honour I'll descend into the grave :

" For tho' Revenge and Malice both combine,
 " (As both to fix my ruin seem to join)

- " Yet, maugre all their violence and skill, 180
 " I can die just, and I'm resolv'd I will.
 " But what is death we so unwisely fear ?
 " An end of all our busy tumults here ;
 " The equal lot of Poverty and State,
 " Which all partake of by a certain fate. 185
 " Whoe'er the prospect of mankind surveys
 " At diverse ages, and by diverse ways,
 " Will find them from this noisy scene retire ;
 " Some the first minute that they breathe expire ;
 " Others, perhaps, survive to talk and go, 190
 " But die before they good or evil know.
 " Here one to puberty arrives, and then
 " Returns lamented to the dust again ;
 " Another there maintains a longer strife
 " With all the pow'rful enemies of life, 195
 " Till, with vexation tir'd, and threescore years,
 " He drops into the dark and disappears.
 " I'm young, indeed, and might expect to see
 " Times future long, and late posterity ;
 " 'Tis what with reason I could wish to do, 200
 " If to be old were to be happy too :
 " But since substantial grief so soon destroys
 " The gust of all imaginary joys,
 " Who would be too importunate to live,
 " Or more for life than it can merit give? 205
 " Beyond the grave stupendous regions lie,
 " The boundless realms of vast eternity !
 " Where minds, remov'd from earthly bodies, dwell,
 " But who their government or laws can tell ?
 " What's their employment till the final doom, 210
 " And time's eternal period shall come ?
 " Thus much the sacred Oracles declare,
 " That all are bless'd or miserable there ;
 " Tho' if there's such variety of fate,
 " None good expire too soon, nor bad too late. 215
 " For my own part, with resignation still
 " I can submit to my Creator's will ;
 " Let him recal the breath from him I drew
 " When he thinks fit, and when he pleases too.

“ The way of dying is my least concern ;

“ That will give no disturbance to my urn.

“ If to the seats of happiness I go,

“ There end all possible returns of woe ;

“ And when to those bless'd mansions I arrive,

“ With pity I'll behold those that survive.

225

“ Once more, I beg you'd from these tents retreat

“ And leave me to my innocence and fate.”

“ Charion,” said I, “ oh ! do not urge my flight !

“ I'll see th' event of this important night ;

“ Some strange presages in my soul forbode

230

“ The worst of mis'ries or the greatest good.

“ Few hours will shew the utmost of my doom,

“ A joyful safety, or a peaceful tomb.

“ If you miscarry I'm resolv'd to try

“ If gracious heav'n will suffer me to die ;

235

“ For when you are to endless raptures gone,

“ If I survive 'tis but to be undone.

“ Who will support an injur'd widow's right,

“ From sly injustice or oppressive might ?

“ Protect her person, or her cause defend ?

240

“ She rarely wants a foe or finds a friend.

“ I've no distrust of Providence ; but still

“ 'Tis best to go beyond the reach of ill ;

“ And those can have no reason to repent,

“ Who, tho' they die betimes, die innocent.

245

“ But to a world of everlasting bliss

“ Why would you go and leave me here in this ?

“ 'Tis a dark passage ; but our foes shall view

“ I'll die as calm, tho' not so brave, as you,

“ That my behaviour to the last may prove

250

“ Your courage is no greater than my love.”

The hour approach'd : as to Neronior's tent,

With trembling but impatient steps I went,

A thousand horrors throng'd into my breast,

By sad ideas and strong fears possess'd :

255

Where'er I pass'd the glaring lights would show

Fresh objects of despair, and scenes of woe.

Here, in a crowd of drunken soldiers, stood

wretched, poor, old man, besmear'd with blood,

And at his feet, just through the body run, 260
 Struggling for life, was laid his only son,
 By whose hard labour he was daily fed,
 Dividing still, with pious care, his bread ;
 And while he mourn'd, with floods of aged tears,
 The sole support of his decrepit years, 265
 The barb'rous mob, whose rage no limit knows,
 With blasphemous derision mock'd his woes.

There, under a wide oak, disconsolate,
 And drown'd in tears, a mournful widow fate ;
 High in the boughs the murder'd father hung ; 270
 Beneath the children round the mother clung :
 They cry'd for food, but 'twas without relief,
 For all they had to live upon was grief.
 A sorrow so intense, such deep despair,
 No creature merely human long could bear. 275
 First in her arms her weeping babes she took,
 And with a groan did to her husband look,
 Then lean'd her head on theirs, and, sighing, cry'd,
 " Pity me, Saviour of the world ! " and dy'd.

From this sad spectacle my eyes I turn'd, 280
 Where sons their fathers, maids their lovers, mourn'd.
 Friends for their friends, sisters for brothers, wept,
 Pris'ners of war in chains for slaughter kept :
 Each ev'ry hour did the black message dread
 Which should declare the person lov'd was dead. 285
 Then I beheld, with brutal shouts of mirth,
 A comely youth, and of no common birth,
 To execution led, who hardly bore
 The wounds in battle he receiv'd before ;
 And as he pass'd, I heard him bravely cry, 290
 " I neither wish to live, nor fear to die."

At the curs'd tent arriv'd, without delay
 They did me to the General convey,
 Who thus began——

" Madam, by fresh intelligence I find 295
 " That Charion's treason's of the blackest kind,
 " And my commission is express, to spare
 " None that so deeply in rebellion are.
 " New measures therefore 'tis in vain to try ;

- “ No pardon can be granted, he must die :
 “ Must, or I hazard all ; which yet I’d do
 “ To be oblig’d in one request by you ;
 “ And, margre all the dangers I foresee,
 “ Be mine this night, I’ll set your husband free.
 “ Soldiers are rough, and cannot hope success 305
 “ By supple flatt’ry and by soft address :
 “ The pert gay coxcomb by these little arts
 “ Gains an ascendant o’er the ladies’ hearts ;
 “ But I can no such whining methods use :
 “ Consent he lives, he dies if you refuse.” 310
 Amaz’d at this demand ; said I, “ The brave
 “ Upon ignoble terms disdains to save ;
 “ They let their captives still with honour live,
 “ No more require than what themselves would give :
 “ For gen’rous victors, as they scorn to do 315
 “ Dishonest things, scorn to propose ’em too.
 “ Mercy, the brightest virtue of the mind,
 “ Should with no devious appetite be join’d ;
 “ For if, when exercis’d, a crime it cost,
 “ Th’ intrinsic lustre of the deed is lost. 320
 “ Great men their actions of a piece should have,
 “ Heroic all, and each entirely brave !
 “ From the nice rules of honour none should swerve,
 “ Done because good, without a mean reserve.
 “ ‘The crimes new charg’d upon th’ unhappy youth
 “ May have revenge and malice, but no truth. 326
 “ Suppose the accusation justly brought,
 “ And clearly prov’d to the minutest thought,
 “ Yet mercies next to infinite abate
 “ Offences next to infinitely great ; 330
 “ And ’tis the glory of a noble mind
 “ In full forgiveness not to be confin’d.
 “ Your prince’s frowns if you have cause to fear,
 “ This act will more illustrious appear,
 “ Tho’ his excuse can never be withstood, 335
 “ Who disobey’s but only to be good.
 “ Perhaps the hazard’s more than you express ;
 “ The glory would be were the danger less :
 “ For he that, to his prejudice, will do

" A noble action, and a gen'rous too, 340
 " Deserves to wear a more resplendant crown
 " Than he that hath a thousand battles won.
 " Do not invert divine compassion so
 " As to be cruel and no mercy show.
 " Of what renown can such an action be, 345
 " Which saves my husband's life but ruins me?
 " Tho' if you finally resolve to stand
 " Upon so vile inglorious a demand,
 " He must submit: if 'tis my fate to mourn
 " His death, I'll bathe with virt'ous tears his urn. 350
 " Well, Madam," haughtily, Neronior cry'd,
 " Your courage and your virtue shall be try'd;
 " But to prevent all prospect of a flight,
 " Some of my Lambs* shall be your guard to-night:
 " By them, no doubt, you'll tenderly be us'd; 355
 " They seldom ask a favour that's refus'd:
 " Perhaps you'll find them so genteelly bred,
 " They'll leave you but few virt'ous tears to shed.
 " Surrounded with so innocent a throng,
 " The night must pass delightfully along; 360
 " And in the morning, since you will not give
 " What I require, to let your husband live,
 " You shall behold him sigh his latest breath,
 " And gently swing into the arms of Death.
 " His fate he merits, as to rebels due, 365
 " And your's will be as much deserv'd by you."
 Oh! Celia, think, so far as thought can show
 What pangs of grief, what agonies of woe,
 At this dire resolution, seiz'd my breast,
 By all things sad and terrible possess'd! 370
 In vain I wept, and 'twas in vain I pray'd,
 For all my pray'rs were to a tiger made;
 A tiger! worse; for 'tis beyond dispute
 No fiend's so cruel as a reas'ning brute.
 Encompas'd thus, and hopeless of relief, 375
 With all the squadrons of despair and grief,
 Ruin—it was not possible to shun:
 What could I do? oh! what would you have done?

* Kirke used to call the most inhuman of his soldiers lambs.

The hours that pass'd till the black morn return'd
 With tears of blood should be for ever mourn'd; 380
 When, to involve me with consummate grief,
 Beyond expression, and above relief,

"Madam," the monster cry'd, that you may find
 "I can be grateful to the fair that's kind,
 "Step to the door, I'll shew you such a sight 385
 "Shall overwhelm your spirits with delight.

"Does not that wretch, who would dethrone his king,
 "Become the gibbet, and adorn the string?

"You need not now an injur'd husband dread;
 "Living he might, he'll not upbraid you dead. 390

"'Twas for your sake I seiz'd upon his life;
 "He would, perhaps, have scorn'd so chaste a wife.

"And, Madam, you'll excuse the zeal I show

"To keep the secret none alive should know."

"Curs'd of all creatures! for, compar'd with thee,
 "The devils," said I, "are dull in cruelty, 396

"Oh! may that tongue eternal vipers breed,

"And, wasteless, their eternal hunger feed,

"In fires too hot for salamanders dwell,

"The burning earnest of a hotter hell! 400

"May that vile lump of execrable lust,

"Corrupt alive, and rot into the dust!

"May'st thou, despairing, at the point of death,

"With oaths and blasphemies resign thy breath; 404

"And the worst torments that the damn'd should share

"In thine own person all united bear!"

Oh! Celia! oh! my friend! what age can show
 Sorrows like mine, so exquisite a woe?

Indeed it does not infinite appear,

Because it can't be everlasting here; 410

But 'tis so vast that it can ne'er increase,

And so confirm'd it never can be less.

STREPHON'S LOVE FOR DELIA JUSTIFIED.

IN AN EPISTLE TO CELADON.

ALL men have follies, which they blindly trace
 Thro' the dark turnings of a dubions maze;
 But happy those who, by a prudent care,
 Retreat betimes from the fallacious snare.

The eldest sons of Wisdom were not free
 From the same failure you condemn in me;
 They lov'd, and, by that glorious passion led,
 Forgot what Plato and themselves had said:
 Love triumph'd o'er those dull pedantic rules
 They had collected from the wrangling schools, 10
 And made 'em to his noble sway submit,
 In spite of all their learning, art, and wit;
 Their grave starch'd morals then unuseful prov'd;
 These dusty characters he soon remov'd;
 For when his shining squadrons came in view, 15
 Their boasted reason murmur'd and withdrew,
 Unable to oppose their mighty force
 With phlegmatic resolves and dry discourse.

If, as the wisest of the wise have err'd,
 I go astray, and am condemn'd unheard, 20
 My faults you too severely reprehend,
 More like a rigid censor than a friend.
 Love is the monarch passion of the mind,
 Knows no superior, by no laws confin'd,
 But triumphs still, impatient of control, 25
 O'er all the proud endowments of the soul.

You own'd my Delia, Friend! divinely fair,
 When in the bud her native beauties were;
 Your praise did then her early charms confess;
 Yet you'd persuade me to adore her less. 30
 You but the nonage of her beauty saw,
 But might from thence sublime ideas draw,
 And what she is, by what she was, conclude,
 For now she governs those she then subdu'd.

Her aspect noble, and mature is grown, 35
 And ev'ry charm in its full vigour known;
 There we may wond'ring view, distinctly writ,
 The lines of goodness and the marks of wit;
 Each feature, emulous of pleasing most,
 Does justly some peculiar sweetness boast; 40
 And her composure's of so fine a frame,
 Pride cannot hope to mend, nor Envy blame. }

When the immortal beauties of the skies
 Contended naked for the golden prize,

The apple had not fall'n to Venus' share 45
 Had I been Paris, and my Delia there,
 In whom alone we all their graces find ;
 The moving gaiety of Venus join'd
 With Juno's aspect and Minerva's mind.

View but those nymphs whom other swains adore,
 You'll value charming Delia still the more. 51
 Dorinda's mien's majestic, but her mind
 Is to revenge and peevishness inclin'd ;
 Myrtylla's fair, and yet Myrtylla's proud ;
 Chloe has wit, but noisy, vain, and loud ; 55
 Melania dotes upon the silliest things,
 And yet Melania like an angel sings :
 But in my Delia all endowments meet,
 All that is just, agreeable, or sweet ;
 All that can praise and admiration move ; 60
 All that the wisest and the bravest love.

In all discourse she's apposite and gay,
 And ne'er wants something pertinent to say ;
 For if the subject's of a serious kind,
 Her thoughts are manly, and her sense refin'd ; 65
 But if divertive, her expressions fit,
 Good language join'd with inoffensive wit ;
 So cautious always, that she ne'er affords
 An idle thought the charity of words.

The vices common to her sex can find 70
 No room ev'n in the suburbs of her mind ;
 Concluding wisely she's in danger still
 From the mere neighb'rhood of industrious ill ;
 Therefore, at distance keeps the subtle foe,
 Whose near approach would formidable grow ; 75
 While the unwary virgin is undone,
 And meets the mis'ry which she ought to shun.

Her wit is penetrating, clear, and gay,
 But lets true judgement and right reason sway ;
 Modesty bold, and quick to apprehend, 80
 Prompt in replies, but cautious to offend.
 Her darts are keen, but level'd with such care,
 They ne'er fall short, and seldom fly too far ;
 For when she rallies 'tis with so much art,

We blush with pleasure, and with rapture smart.

O, Celadon! you would my flame approve, 86
Did you but hear her talk, and talk of love;

That tender passion to her fancy brings
The prettiest notions and the softest things,
Which are by her so movingly express'd, 90

They fill with ecstasy my throbbing breast:

'Tis then the charms of eloquence impart

Their native glories, unimprov'd by art:

By what she says I measure things above,

And guess the language of seraphic love. 95

To the cool bosom of a peaceful shade,

By some wild beach or lofty poplar made,

When ev'ning comes, we secretly repair

To breathe in private and unbend our care;

And while our flocks in fruitful pastures feed, 100

Some well-design'd instructive poem read,

Where useful morals, with soft numbers join'd,

At once delight and cultivate the mind,

Which are by her to more perfection brought,

By wise remarks upon the poet's thought. 105

So well she knows the stamp of eloquence,

The empty sound of words from solid sense,

The florid fustian of a rhyming spark,

Whose random arrow ne'er comes near the mark,

Can't on her judgment be impos'd and pass 110

For standard gold, when 'tis but gilded brass.

Oft' in the walks of an adjacent grove,

Where first we mutually engag'd to love,

She, smiling, ask'd me, "Whether I'd prefer

"An humble cottage on the plains with her, 115

"Before the pompous buildings of the great,

"And find content in that inferior state?"

Said I, "The question you propose to me

"Perhaps a matter of debate might be,

"Were the degrees of my affection less 120

"Than burning martyrs to the gods express.

"In you I've all I can desire below,

"That earth can give me, or the gods bestow;

"And blest'd with you, I know not where to find

" A second choice : you take up all my mind. 125

" I'd not forsake that dear delightful plain,

" Where charming Delia ! Love and Delia reign,

" For all the splendour that a court can give,

" Where gaudy fools and busy statesmen live.

" Tho' youthful Paris, when his birth was known,

" (Too fatally related to a throne) 131

" Forsook Oenone and his rural sports,

" For dang'rous greatness and tumult'ous courts ;

" Yet Fate should still offer its power in vain,

" For what is power to such an humble swain ? 135

" I would not leave my Delia, leave my fair,

" Tho' half the globe should be assign'd my share."

And would you have me, friend ! reflect again,

Become the basest and the worst of men ;

O, do not urge me, Celadon ! forbear ;

140

I cannot leave her, she's too charming fair !

Should I your counsel in this case pursue,

You might suspect me for a villain too ;

For sure that perjur'd wretch can never prove

Just to his friend who's faithless to his love.

145

AN EPISTLE TO DELIA.

AS those who hope hereafter heav'n to share,

A rig'rous exile here can calmly bear,

And with collected spirits undergo

The sad variety of pain below,

Yet with intense reflections antedate

5

The mighty raptures of a future state,

While the bright prospect of approaching joy

Creates a bliss no trouble can destroy ;

So tho' I'm toss'd by giddy Fortune's hand

Ev'n to the confines of my native land,

10

Where I can hear the stormy ocean roar,

And break its waves upon the foaming shore ;

Tho' from my Delia banish'd, all that's dear,

That's good, or beautiful, or charming, here ;

Yet flatt'ring hopes encourage me to live,

And tell me Fate will kinder minutes give ;

That the dark treasury of time contains

A glorious day will finish all my pains ;
 And while I contemplate on joys to come,
 My griefs are silent and my sorrows dumb,
 Believe me, nymph ! believe me, charming fair !
 (When truth's conspicuous we need not swear ;
 Oaths would suppose a diffidence in you
 That I am false, my flame fictitious too)
 Were I condemn'd, by Fate's imperial pow'r,
 Ne'er to return to your embraces more,
 I'd scorn whate'er the busy world could give ;
 'Twould be the worst of miseries to live ;
 For all my wishes and desires pursue,
 All I admire or covet here, is you.
 Were I possess'd of your surprising charms,
 And lodg'd again within my Delia's arms,
 Then would my joys ascend to that degree,
 Could angels envy, they would envy me.

Oft', as I wander in a silent shade,
 When bold vexations would my soul invade,
 I banish the rough thought, and none pursue
 But what inclines my willing mind to you :
 The soft reflections on your sacred love,
 Like sov'reign antidotes, all cares remove ;
 Composing ev'ry faculty to rest,
 They leave a grateful flavour in my breast.

Retir'd sometimes into a lonely grove,
 I think o'er all the stories of our love.
 What mighty pleasure have I oft' possess'd,
 When in a masculine embrace, I prest
 The lovely Delia to my heaving breast !
 Then I remember, and with vast delight,
 The kind expressions of the parting night :
 Methought the sun too quick return'd again,
 And day seem'd ne'er impertinent till then.
 Strong and contracted was our eager bliss ;
 An age of pleasure in each gen'rous kiss :
 Years of delight in moments we compriz'd,
 And Heav'n itself was there epitomiz'd.

But when the glories of the Eastern light
 O'erflow'd the twinkling tapers of the night,

“ Farewel, my Delia ! O, farewel ! ” said I,
 “ The utmost period of my time is nigh ;
 “ Too cruel Fate forbids my longer stay, 60
 “ And wretched Strephon is compell’d away.
 “ But tho’ I must my native plaints forego,
 “ Forsake these fields, forsake my Delia too,
 “ No change of fortune shall for ever move
 “ The settled base of my immortal love.” 65
 “ And must my Strephon, must my faithful swain,
 “ Be forc’d,” you cry’d, “ to a remoter plain !
 “ The darling of my soul so soon remov’d !
 “ The only valu’d, and the best belov’d !
 “ Tho’ other swains to me themselves addrest, 70
 “ Strephon was still distinguish’d from the rest ;
 “ Flat and insipid all their courtship seem’d ;
 “ Little themselves, their passions less, esteem’d ;
 “ For my aversion with their flames increas’d,
 “ And none but Strephon partial Delia pleas’d. 75
 “ Tho’ I’m depriv’d of my kind shepherd’s sight,
 “ Joy of the day and blessing of the night,
 “ Yet will you, Strephon ! will you love me still ?
 “ However flatter me, and say you will ;
 “ For should you entertain a rival love, 80
 “ Should you unkind to me or faithless prove,
 “ No mortal e’er could half so wretched be,
 “ For sure no mortal ever lov’d like me.”
 “ Your beauty, Nymph ! said I, my faith secures ;
 “ Those you once conquer must be alway’s your’s :
 “ For hearts subdu’d by your victorious eyes 86
 “ No force can storm, no stratagem surprise :
 “ Nor can I of captivity complain,
 “ While lovely Delia holds the glorious chain.
 “ The Cyprian queen, in young Adonis’ arms, 90
 “ Might fear, at least, he would despise her charms ;
 “ But I can never such a Monster prove,
 “ To flight the blessings of my Delia’s love.
 “ Would those who at celestial tables sit,
 “ Bless’d with immortal wine, immortal wit, 95
 “ Chuse to descend to some inferior board,
 “ Which nought but scum and nonsense can afford ?

" Nor can I e'er to those gay nymphs address,
 " Whose pride is greater, and whose charms are less ;
 " Their tinsel beauty may, perhaps, subdue 100
 " A gaudy coxcomb, or a fulsome beau,
 " But seem at best indifferent to me,
 " Who none but you with admiration see.
 " Now would the rolling orbs obey my will,
 " I'd make the sun a second time stand still, 105
 " And to the lower world their light repay,
 " When conqu'ring Joshua robb'd 'em of a day ;
 " Tho' our two souls would diff'rent passions prove,
 " His was a thirst of glory, mine of love.
 " It will not be ; the sun makes haste to rise, 110
 " And take possession of the eastern skies ;
 " Yet one more kiss, tho' millions are two few,
 " And Delia ! since me must, must part, adieu."

As Adam, by an injur'd Maker driv'n
 From Eden's grove, the vicinage of heav'n, 115
 Compell'd to wander, and oblig'd to bear,
 The harsh impressions of a ruder air,
 With mighty sorrow, and with weeping eyes
 Look'd back, and mourn'd the loss of Paradise ;
 With a concern, like his, did I review 120
 My native plains, my charming Delia too ;
 For I left Paradise in leaving you.

If, as I walk, a pleasant shade I find,
 It brings your fair idea to my mind :
 Such was the happy place, I, fighting, say, 125
 Where I and Delia, lovely Delia ! lay,
 When first I did my tender thoughts impart,
 And made a grateful present of my heart :
 Or if my friend, in his apartment, shows
 Some piece of Vandyke's, or of Angelo's, 130
 In which the artist has, with wondrous care,
 Describ'd the face of one exceeding fair,
 Tho' at first sight it may my passion raise,
 And every feature I admire and praise,
 Yet still methinks, upon a second view, 135
 'Tis not so beautiful, so fair, as you.
 If I converse with those whom most admit

To have a ready, gay, vivacious wit,
 They want some amiable moving grace,
 Some turn of fancy, that my Delia has ; 140
 For ten good thoughts amongst the crowd they vent,
 Methinks ten thousand are impertinent.

Let other shepherds that are prone to range,
 With each caprice their giddy humours change ;
 They from variety less joys receive 145
 Than you alone are capable to give :
 Nor will I envy those ill-judging swains,
 (What they enjoy's the refuse of the plains),
 If, for my share of happiness below,
 Kind Heav'n upon me Delia would bestow ; 150
 Whatever blessings it can give beside,
 Let all mankind among themselves divide.

TO HIS FRIEND, UNDER AFFLICTION.

NONE lives in this tumultuous state of things,
 Where every morning some new troubles brings,
 But bold inquietudes will break his rest,
 And gloomy thoughts disturb his anxious breast.
 Angelic forms and happy spirits are
 Above the malice of perplexing care ; 5
 But that's a blessing too sublime, too high
 For those who bend beneath mortality.
 If in the body there was but one part
 Subject to pain, and sensible of smart, 10
 And but one passion could torment the mind,
 That part, that passion, busy Fate would find :
 But since infirmities in both abound,
 Since sorrow both so many ways can wound,
 'Tis not so great a wonder that we grieve 15
 Sometimes, as 'tis a miracle we live.

The happiest man that ever breath'd on earth,
 With all the glories of estate and birth,
 Had yet some anxious care, to make him know
 No grandeur was above the reach of woe. 20
 To be from all things that disquiet free
 Is not consistent with humanity
 Youth, wit, and beauty, are such charming things,

O'er which, if Affluence spreads her gaudy wings,
We think the person who enjoys so much 25
No care can move, and no affliction touch :
Yet could we but some secret method find,
To view the dark recesses of the mind,
We there might see the hidden seed of strife,
And woes in embryo rip'ning into life ; 30
How some fierce lust, or boist'rous passion fills,
The lab'ring spirit with prolific ills ;
Pride, envy, or revenge, distract the soul,
And all-right reason's godlike pow'rs control :
But if she must not be allow'd to sway, 35
Though all without appears serene and gay,
A cank'rous venom on the vitals preys,
And poisons all the comforts of his days.

External pomp, and visible success,
Sometimes contribute to our happiness ; 40
But that which makes it genuine, refin'd,
Is a good conscience, and a soul resign'd :
Then to whatever end affliction's sent,
To try our virtues, or for punishment,
We bear it calmly, though a pond'rous woe, 45
And still adore the hand that gives the blow ;
For in misfortune this advantage lies,
They make us humble, and they make us wise ;
And he that can acquire such virtues, gains
An ample recompence for all his pains. 50

Too soft caresses of a prosp'rous fate
The pious fervours of the soul abate,
Tempt to luxurious ease our careless days,
And gloomv vapours round the spirits raise :
Thus, lull'd into a sleep, we dozing lie, 55
And find our ruin in security,
Unless some sorrow comes to our relief,
And breaks th' enchantment by a timely grief.
But as we are allowed, to cheer our sight,
In blackest days some glimmerings of light, 60
So in the most dejected hours we may
The secret pleasure have to weep and pray ;
And those requests the speediest passage find

To heaven which flow from an afflicted mind ;
 And while to him we open our distress, 65
 Our pains grow lighter and our sorrows less.
 The finest music of the grove we owe
 To morning Philomel's harmonious woe,
 And while her grief's in charming notes exprest,
 A thorny bramble pricks her tender breast ; 70
 In warbling melody she spends the night,
 And moves at once compassion and delight.

No choice had e'er so happy an event
 But he that made it did that choice repent.
 So weak's our judgment, and so short's our sight,
 We cannot level our own wishes right ; 75
 And if sometimes we make a wise advance,
 T'ourselves we little owe, but much to chance :
 So that when Providence, for secret ends,
 Corroding cares or sharp affliction sends, 80
 We must conclude it best it should be so,
 And not desponding or impatient grow ;
 For he that will his confidence remove
 From boundless wisdom and eternal love,
 To place it on himself or human aid, 85
 Will meet those woes he labours to evade :
 But in the keenest agonies of grief
 Content's a cordial that still gives relief.
 Heaven is not always angry when she strikes,
 But most chastises those whom most she likes, 90
 And if with humble spirits they complain,
 Relieves the anguish, or rewards the pain. 92

TO ANOTHER FRIEND UNDER AFFLICTION.

SINCE the first man by disobedience fell
 An easy conquest to the pow'rs of hell,
 There's none in ev'ry stage of life can be
 From the insults of bold Affliction free.
 If a short respite gives us some relief, 5
 And interrupts the series of our grief
 So quick the pangs of misery return,
 We joy by minutes, but by years we mourn.
 Reason refin'd, and to perfection brought,
 By wise philosophy, and serious thought, 10

Supports the soul beneath the pond'rous weight
Of angry stars, and unpropitious Fate.

Then is the time she should exert her pow'r,
And make us practise what she taught before;
For why are such volum'nous authors read, 15
The learned labours of the famous dead,
But to prepare the mind for its defence,
By sage results and well-digested sense,
That when the storm of misery appears,
With all its real or fantastic fears, 20
We either may the rolling danger fly,
Or stem the tide before it swells too high?

But though the theory of wisdom's known
With ease, what should, and what should not be done,
Yet all the labour in the practice lies, 25
To be in more than words and notions wise.

The sacred truth of sound philosophy
We study early, but we late apply.
When stubborn anguish seizes on the soul,
Right reason would its hearty rage control; 30

But if it may'nt be suffer'd to endure
The pain is just when we reject the cure:
For many men, close observation finds,
Of copious learning and exalted minds,
Who tremble at the sight of daring woes, 35
And stoop ignobly to the vilest foes,
As if they understood not how to be
Or wise or brave but in felicity;

And by some action servile or unjust,
Lay all their former glories in the dust. 40

For wisdom first the wretched mortal flies,
And leaves him naked to his enemies;
So that, when most his prudence should be shown,
The most imprudent giddy things are done:

For when the mind's surrounded with distress, 45
Fear or inconstancy the judgment press,
And render it incapable to make
Wise resolutions, or good counsels take.

Yet there's a steadiness of soul and thought,
By Reason bred, and by Religion taught, 50

Which, like a rock amidst the stormy waves,
Unmov'd remains, and all affliction braves.

In sharp misfortunes some will search too deep
What heaven prohibits, and would secret keep;
But those events 'tis better not to know, 55
Which, known, serve only to increase our woe.
Knowledge forbid ('tis dang'rous to pursue)
With guilt begins, and ends with ruin too:
For had our earliest parents been content
Not to know more than to be innocent, 60
Their ignorance of evil had preserv'd
Their joys entire, for then they had not swerv'd;
But they imagin'd (their desires were such)
They knew too little, till they knew too much.
E'er since by folly most to wisdom rise, 65
And few are but by sad experience wise.

Consider, friend! who all your blessings gave,
What are recall'd again, and what you have,
And do not murmur when you are bereft
Of little, if you have abundance left. 70
Consider too, how many thousands are
Under the worst of miseries, despair,
And don't repine at what you now endure;
Custom will give you ease, or time will cure.
Once more; consider that the present ill, 75
Though it be great, may yet be greater still;
And be not anxious; for to undergo
One grief is nothing to a num'rous woe.
But since it is impossible to be
Human, and not expos'd to misery, 80
Bear it, my friend! as bravely as you can;
You are not more, and be not less than man!

Affliction past can no existence find
But in the wild ideas of the mind
And why should we for those misfortunes mourn, 85
Which have been suffer'd, and can ne'er return?
Those that have weather'd a tempestuous night,
And find a calm approaching with the light,
Will not, unless their reason they disown,
Still make those dangers present that are gone. 90

What is behind the curtain none can see ;
 It may be joy ; suppose it misery :
 'Tis future still ; and that which is not here
 May never come, or we may never bear :
 Therefore, the present ill alone we ought 95
 To view, in reason, with a troubled thought ;
 But if we may the sacred pages trust,
 He's always happy that is always just. 98

TO HIS FRIEND
 INCLINED TO MARRY.

I WOULD not have you, Strephon, chuse a mate
 From too exalted or too mean a state,
 For in both these we may expect to find
 A creeping spirit or a haughty mind.
 Who moves within the middle region shares 5
 The least disquiets and the smallest cares.
 Let her extraction with true lustre shine ;
 If something brighter, not too bright for thine :
 Her education liberal, not great ;
 Neither inferior nor above her state. 10
 Let her have wit, but let that wit be free
 From affectation, pride, and pedantry ;
 For the effect of woman's wit is such,
 Too little is as dang'rous as too much.
 But, chiefly, let her humour close with thine, 15
 Unless where your's does to a fault incline :
 The least disparity in this destroys,
 Like sulph'rous blasts, the very buds of joys.
 Her person amiable, straight, and free
 From natural, or chance deformity. 20
 Let not her years exceed, if equal thine
 For women past their vigour soon decline.
 Her fortune competent ; and if thy sight
 Can reach so far, take care 'tis gather'd right.
 If thine's enough, then her's may be the less :
 Do not aspire to riches in excess ;
 For that which makes our lives delightful prove,
 Is a genteel sufficiency, and love. 25

TO A PAINTER DRAWING DORINDA'S PICTURE.

PAINTER! the utmost of thy judgment show;
 Exceed ev'n Titian and great Angelo;
 With all the liveliness of thought express
 The moving features of Dorinda's face:
 Thou canst not flatter where such beauties dwell; 5
 Her charms thy colours and thy art excel.
 Others, less fair, may from thy pencil have
 Graces which sparing Nature never gave!
 But in Dorinda's aspect thou wilt see
 Such as will pose thy famous art with thee: 10
 So great, so many, in her face unite,
 So well-proportion'd, and so wond'rous bright,
 No human skill can e'er express 'em all,
 But must do wrong to th' fair original.
 An angel's hand alone the pencil fits 15
 To mix the colours, when an angel sits.

Thy picture may as like Dorinda be
 As art of man can paint a deity,
 And justly may, perhaps, when she withdraws,
 Excite our wonder, and deserve applause; 20
 But when compar'd, you'll be oblig'd to own,
 No art can equal what's by Nature done.
 Great Lely's noble hand, excel'd by few,
 The picture fairer than the person drew:
 He took the best that Nature could impart, 25
 And made it better by his pow'rful art:
 But had he seen that bright surprising grace
 Which spreads itself o'er all Dorinda's face,
 Vain had been all the essays of his skill;
 She must have been confess'd the fairest still. 30

Heav'n in a landscape may be wond'rous fine,
 And look as bright as painted light can shine,
 But still the real glories of that place
 All art by infinite degrees surpass. 34

TO THE PAINTER

AFTER HE HAD FINISHED DORINDA'S PICTURE.

PAINTER! thou hast perform'd what man can do;
 Only Dorinda's self more charms can show.

Bold are thy strokes, and delicate each touch
 But still the beauties of her face are such
 As cannot justly be describ'd, tho' all
 Confess 'tis like the bright original.
 In her, and in thy picture, we may view
 The utmost Nature or that Art can do:
 Each is a masterpicce, design'd so well,
 That future times may strive to parellel,
 But neither Art nor Nature's able to excel.

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FINIS.

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